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THE KREMLIN AND THE PEASANTS

LAZAR VOLIN

IN THE SPRING of 1938 the news flashed to the world that the Kremlin had spoken with a voice of thunder about the iniquitous treatment suffered by the peasants in the *kolkhoz* (collective farms), to which all but a tiny minority of them now belong. A year later the Kremlin thundered again, this time because the peasants were allegedly neglecting their work in the collective fields and concentrating instead on their own little plots or handicrafts. These contradictory outbursts of official wrath emphasize the fact that not all is well on the Soviet agrarian front, at any rate not so far as the peasant is concerned.

This is a matter of serious import, since Soviet Russia is still predominantly a peasant country, in spite of the rapid march of industrialization under the five-year plans, which has been so much in the limelight. Of the one hundred and seventy million people who inhabit the Soviet Union, according to the census of January, 1939, one hundred and fifteen million, or more than two thirds, live on the land. Moreover, the psychological cleavage between town and country is even less than the above figures might suggest; for large numbers of the swollen urban and industrial population only recently left or were forced off the land and, therefore, undoubtedly still retain much of the peasant outlook and sympathies even though they are toiling in workshops and not in the fields. And now some ten million more Ukrainian and Belorussian peasants have been added through the occupation by the Soviet government of the Polish Ukraine and Belorussia. The peasant, therefore, remains the central figure in the Soviet populace, if not in the Soviet economy,

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and the treatment accorded to him by the Kremlin reveals much of the nature and quality of its socialist system.

Even from the standpoint of naked *realpolitik*, peasant discontent is a serious drawback in the present tense international conjuncture. And it is especially true since the Soviet rulers, emulating their Tsarist predecessors and their new Nazi friends, have embarked on a career of imperialistic adventurism which has already drawn them into a war with their small northern neighbor. For after all, it is the Russian peasantry that must provide both the conscripts to do the fighting and the increased food and feed supplies required in wartime. This appears, therefore, to be a highly propitious moment to look into the record of the recent Soviet agrarian policy and examine its impact on the gray mass of tillers of the soil who have to live and work under it.

The Kremlin's relations with the peasantry under the Bolshevik regime have undergone a series of alternations between appeasement and a "strong line," ever since the bitterness of grain requisitions of war communism in 1918 replaced the honeymoon period when Lenin gave carte blanche to the rebellious peasantry to divide the estate lands. But these waverings have not affected the steady pursuit of a thoroughgoing state control over agriculture. How force was used without stint in attainment of this objective during the twin campaign of collectivization and "liquidation of kulaki as a class" is a familiar story today; though it is doubtful whether all the horrors behind its impressive façade of a technical revolution in the farm structure have been fully appreciated by world opinion.

But while the Kremlin did not flinch from the use of force, it could hardly escape the realization that terror has its limits, especially in the economic sphere. It was possible to drive the majority of peasants by fear, coupled with a promise of a more abundant life, into the collectives. It was another matter to make them work as efficiently, not to say more efficiently, in these often huge, unfamiliar, and poorly managed organizations, as they did when they farmed their own petty holdings. The story has often been told, and needs no retelling, of the dangerously delayed sowings, of fields overgrown with weeds, of huge harvesting losses and consequent low crop yields, and of high mortality and poor condition of such livestock as was

left after the wholesale slaughter by the peasants as a prelude to their "voluntary" joining of the collectives.

It was easier, it is true, as mounting procurements of agricultural products attested, for the government to extract the needed supplies from some two hundred thousand collectives, even with a low level of production, than from over twenty million small independent peasant farmers. The "first commandment" of collective farmers, according to Stalin, was to fulfill the "obligations" to the state. In practice this meant during the years 1928-1933, as during the earlier period of war communism, 1918-1921, unlimited requisition of farm produce, undeterred even by wholesale starvation of the village. In *Pravda* for December 23, 1939, the well-known Soviet writer, Michael Sholokhov (whose novel, *Broken Earth*, presents, in spite of its tendenciousness, perhaps the most vivid picture of collectivization), told how in 1933 the Soviet officials, styled now retrospectively "enemies of the people," deprived collective farmers in the fertile Azov-Black Sea area of the entire grain supply. Many Communists who protested were expelled from the party or arrested, and it required, according to Sholokhov, an appeal to Stalin to alleviate the terrible famine.

Doubtless the fear of starvation, of which more than a generous dose was administered by the Kremlin in 1931-1933, made the peasant more pliable. But this discipline could not be relied upon to overcome by itself the serious crisis of agricultural underproduction into which the Soviet Union was plunged, while the capitalistic world was grappling with the problem of farm surpluses. Nor could this be done by tractors and other modern machinery for which the Kremlin manifested an unbounded enthusiasm since the days of Lenin. Valuable as they were, there were not enough tractors in the early thirties (especially in view of the heavy wear and tear due to barbarous handling) to fill the gap caused by the continuously declining number of horses, which suffered the fate of the rest of the livestock population.

Some appeasement of the peasantry was essential if Russian collective agriculture was to be led out of the doldrums, not to speak of the much needed expansion of agricultural production so confidently expected of collectivization. This necessitated an appeal to more normal economic incentives, like that made by Lenin in 1921 when

he executed his celebrated strategic retreat from war communism. But in 1921 this retreat, in the face of a rebellious peasantry supported by city workers and the sailors of Kronstadt, involved really a radical reversal of economic policy in favor of small private enterprise, as the term N.E.P. (New Economic Policy) implied. In the thirties, however, the Kremlin, riding firmly in the saddle on the highroad of collectivization, could dispense with such fundamental changes and confine itself to propitiating gestures, while maintaining its control over Russian agriculture intact.

Perhaps one of the most tangible of such appeasing gestures was the replacement in 1932-1933 of the unlimited exactions of farm products, in the guise of the so-called repeated "plans" of delivery, by specific taxation in kind. This promised a degree of certainty to peasants in collectives that, at any rate in good crop years, they would retain a considerable part of their output. And, as in 1921 when a somewhat similar reform ushered in the N.E.P., the peasants were granted the right, collectively or individually, of disposing of their surplus on the private market. The latter, however, has been much more restricted in scope than in the early years of the N.E.P. and confined to petty local trading, while the professional middleman, known in Soviet parlance as a "speculator," has been legally tabooed. Still, in 1935 for instance, private *(bazar)* trading by collectives accounted for 16 per cent of the total retail trade turnover and undoubtedly constituted a much larger proportion of the trade in foodstuffs alone. Thus the *kolkhoz* trade provided by no means negligible relief to the sorely tried Soviet consumer, who has had to offer much sacrificial belt-tightening on the altars of modern "Socialist industrialization" as well as of ancient Moloch requiring priority of "guns over butter."

What may be regarded as another concession to peasant individualism or, at least, a deviation from the straight and narrow path of socialism, has been the banning by the Kremlin of egalitarian tendencies in collectives. On a priori grounds it might have been expected that agrarian collectivism in a society that is styled Socialist and classless would aim at the maximum degree of economic equality feasible under the varying natural conditions characteristic of farming under any social system. This expectation would seem even more plausible in view of such an exceedingly costly leveling operation as

the "liquidation of the Kulaki," which not only involved a great human tragedy but also entailed the loss of some of the best, most energetic farmers and a catastrophic reduction in livestock numbers. This presumption, however, appears to be wrong as far as the Soviet system is concerned. "Uravnilovka" (leveling), as equal distribution came to be contemptuously known in the Soviet ideological jargon, has become a *petit bourgeois* prejudice, or a "manifestation of primitive peasant communism" and therefore taboo in a Socialist economy.

In order to stimulate production, a method of payment by results, corresponding somewhat to a piece-work wage, with differentiation of remuneration according to skill, was introduced in the *kolkhoz* as in the Soviet factory. Here Socialist reality has played havoc with what Socialist writers like G. D. H. Cole and especially Bernard Shaw, formerly held up as an egalitarian ideal. It must also be pointed out that the collective farmer, unlike the factory piece worker or a worker on a state farm, does not have the advantage of a regularly paid wage, compensating him for the work performed during a specific period. His position is rather that of a partner in a business, who is a residual claimant to the income of the enterprise after the payment of taxes and other obligations and defrayal of current and capital expenses.

The system of steeply differentiated payment by results reached its pinnacle with the introduction in 1935-1936 of the so-called Stakhanovist speed-up methods whereby the "shock" workers earned several times the income of the average worker on the farm. These are the *znatnye liudi* (notables), eulogized and honored by the Kremlin, which has been "liquidating" as *Kulaki* or "speculators" those individual peasant farmers who managed to possess an extra horse or cow or to cultivate a few more acres of land. Of course, it is by no means certain that this new village aristocracy will not be visited one day with the fate of the *Kulaki*, with whom the Bolsheviks, too, carried on a serious flirtation in the early twenties. In the meantime, stories in the Horatio Alger vein of successful collective farmers with large incomes, mostly tractor drivers, combine operators, and those engaged in production of valuable industrial crops like cotton, sugar beets, etc., have frequently appeared in the pages of the Soviet press together with reports of millionaire collectives, i.e., collectives counting their revenue in million rubles. Thus *Pravda*

of January 17, 1939, carried an item about one collective peasant family in the principal Soviet cotton-growing region of Uzbekistan (Turkestan) earning 22,000 rubles, and another 24,000 rubles. Even higher incomes were occasionally reported. But data for cash payments in 221,029 collectives indicated that in 1937, a year of bumper crops, only 14 per cent of collectives paid over 1 ruble (20 cents in United States currency at the overvalued legal par of exchange) per "labor day," which is a unit for calculating wages and is not synonymous with the average working day on a collective farm. (A collective farm family was credited on the average with about 440 "labor days" in 1937.) More than 60 per cent of collectives paid not over 60 kopecks (12 cents) and most of them less than that. Some paid nothing. That consequently a new inequality has been creeping into the Russian village has been apparently a matter of indifference to the Marxists of the Kremlin, so long as it is not inequality based on possession of land or productive capital and so long as it helps to speed up the work in the factory or the field.

In line with the same anti-egalitarian trend has been the shelving of a full-fledged commune as a form of present-day organization of collective farms. According to Stalin, it is only appropriate to the future economy of abundance. As a result of this policy, whereas in 1930 about 9 per cent of all collectives were communes, in 1933 they constituted less than 2 per cent. At the other extreme, the simple co-operative societies for joint cultivation of land, which predominated among collectives in 1929, also constituted less than 2 per cent in 1933. The preponderant type of collective that has the Kremlin's official blessing is the *artel*, in which only the principal means of production are collectivized, while the household economy of the peasant remains on an individual basis. The latter, however, is not only a consumption but also to some extent a production unit since each household is supposed to have a small plot of land for a kitchen garden and a few animals—a sort of "an acre and a cow" farming to supplement the basic collective economy.

These various features were embodied in a new constitution or typical charter of the *kolkhoz*, on which the charters of individual collectives were to be modeled, with minor local variations. The promulgation of this much advertised fundamental law in February, 1935, represented perhaps the most spectacular gesture in the Krem-

lin's agrarian appeasement campaign. It was discussed and formally adopted by a specially convoked congress of so-called collective shock farmers, an *ad hoc* assembly consisting mostly of the officials of collectives, some rank-and-file members, and some of the highest Kremlin dignitaries, headed by Stalin himself.

The new, or as it is often called Stalinist, charter re-emphasized the self-governing character of collective farming, which in theory it had always possessed but which in practice seemed to be largely fictitious with the ever increasing government regimentation of Soviet agriculture. This regimentation had meant complete domination of collectives by the Bolshevist officials, who had appointed, dismissed, and transferred managers and officers at will. In turn, the latter had lorded it over the rank and file and managed the finances of the collectives as they pleased. They had arbitrarily fined and expelled members and spent the funds of the collectives in such a manner that often little had been left for distribution among the members.

The elective character of the officers was reaffirmed by the charter, their tenure lengthened, and the general assembly of the membership restored to the forefront among the governing organs of the collectives. It was also sought to make the expulsion of members more difficult and to safeguard, in general, the rights of the rank and file. Especially important was the clearer definition of the rights of each household to a small plot of land for a kitchen garden and to individual possession of a few animals, which were now stated not in general but in specific terms for each large region. Another objective was to put the finances of the collectives in order, to introduce stricter budgeting, and, particularly, to limit expenditures for administrative purposes and for capital improvements.

A fresh and much publicized effort was likewise made, after the failure of previous legislation, to protect the collectives against constant encroachments on their land area. In order to stabilize the latter, provision was made for the issue of title deeds giving perpetual tenure after the land of each collective had been surveyed. This area was not to be reduced in the future but could be increased at the expense of other land. Such an increase has actually taken place since 1935 through the liquidation of a number of unprofitable large-scale state farms, which the Kremlin had organized after the food crisis became acute in 1928.

While the charter aimed to establish some sort of a rule of law in the countryside, it did not by its terms diminish state control of collective agriculture. Paragraph 6 of the charter specifies twice that all the operations of collective farms are to be carried out in accordance with government plans, which, incidentally, became more and more detailed and embraced every phase of farming. Since the local officials had to see that the plans laid down by the Kremlin were carried out and that all obligations of collectives to the state were discharged, they necessarily had to be armed with considerable authority. Moreover, most of the collectives vitally depend on over six thousand state-owned machine-tractor stations, in which the tractors, combines, and other modern farm machinery are concentrated and which became powerful weapons of Soviet control in the countryside. Paradoxically, the very shortage of horses (slaughtered by peasants during the early days of collectivization) tended to strengthen the Kremlin's control over peasant agriculture by making the tractor indispensable.

Actually the local officials from the start flouted the provisions of the charter as if it had never existed. The Soviet press has been filled with reports from all over the country of flagrant violations of the new law. Local officials have continued to get elected as officers of the collectives whomever they wanted and to get rid of those who have fallen out of favor. It was charged that officers of the collectives still fined and expelled the members freely and expended the revenues at will, leaving but little for distribution among the members.

And then in 1937 came the Great Purge, which was rightly compared in its effect on Soviet bureaucracy of all ranks to a geological cataclysm. The agricultural administration suffered no less, if not more, than other branches of the far-flung Soviet bureaucratic apparatus, with two Commissars of Agriculture, Chernov, who was shot, and his successor, Eiche, disappearing from the official horizon. And so it went on from top to bottom. The purge provided convenient scapegoats in wholesale quantities for much of the past mistreatment or oppression of the peasantry that it was now deemed opportune by the Kremlin to repudiate. Thus, the exceedingly severe sentences meted out in accordance with a Draconian law of August 7, 1932, for such "crimes" as "theft" of grain ears remaining in the fields after the harvest were attributed by the Soviet prosecu-

tor, A. Vishinskii, of the old Bolsheviks' "trials" fame, to an effort to "discredit" the law on the part of the "Trotskyist-Bukharinist apostates" (*Izvestiia,* August 6, 1937). Or, take the situation in the Kuban district of North Caucasus. There the local Kossack population had shown a strong resistance to collectivization and had been handled with great severity by the government, which had deported whole villages. It was claimed, however, in the official *Sotsialisticheskoe Zemledelie* for November 17, 1937, that the "Kulak sabotage was organized by Trotskyist-Bukharinist bands which operated in the provincial and in some district institutions... They desired to force the collectivized peasantry and Kossacks, through 'the bony hand of hunger,' to leave the collectives and once more come under the yoke of the Attamans [Kossack chieftains] and Kulaks." Incidentally, one of the leading Bolshevik officials in North Caucasus, Sheboldaev, who had been responsible for carrying out the ruthless policy of the Kremlin, was shot during the purge in 1937.

While some of the oppressive or corrupt officials have fallen in the purge, it not only did not bring relief to the peasantry but, on the contrary, resulted in fresh oppression. For the purge did not stop with officialdom or with the few Communists in the village;[1] it extended its tentacles to the rank-and-file peasants. It was revealed with much indignation in a decree signed by Stalin and Molotov in April, 1938, that wholesale illegal expulsion and underpayment of members of the collectives took place. It was stated in the decree that "a predominant majority of expulsions from the collectives are entirely unjustified and take place without any serious cause and for the least important reason"; although the consequence of such an action is "to doom one to starvation."

The Kremlin once more, as has been its custom, blamed the leading local Soviet and Party officials who, it was claimed, not only did not stop such practices on the part of the officers of collectives but frequently encouraged the latter towards illegal expulsion of peasants

[1] It was stated at the XVIII Party Congress in the spring of 1939 that, in spite of some recent growth, only twelve thousand out of over two hundred forty thousand collectives had party organizations, with a total membership of one hundred, fifty-three thousand, or less than 10 per cent of the membership of the whole Communist party. Even the "*Komsomol,*" the Communist Youth Organization, was weak in the Russian village, although some progress in the expansion of rural Communist organizations was reported during the past year.

"under the guise of purging collectives from socially foreign and hostile class elements."

All sorts of reasons were given for expulsion from collectives, including possession "of religious convictions and a long beard." That the purge, however, was by no means haphazard could be gathered from the widespread illegal expulsions of the families of collective farmers who found permanent or temporary work in various state enterprises. In this manner the number of claimants to collective income and land was reduced. But the government also revealed the cause which has been largely forcing peasants in the collectives to seek outside employment; namely, the abuses in the distribution of the income, particularly of cash income.

It was pointed out that much of the revenue of the collective farms was used up by heavy administrative and other current expenses or by capital improvements which were often so poorly planned that in the words of the organ of the Commissariat of Agriculture "the number of unfinished barnyards, stables and other buildings in collectives is increasing from year to year." Even more important fundamentally, though officially not emphasized, has been the fact that a significant share of the output of such farms is appropriated by the state, either as compulsory deliveries at relatively low fixed prices or in payment to the state machine-tractor stations. The pivotal state grain procurements, for instance, increased from less than twelve million short tons in 1928 to over thirty-two million tons in 1937, and the collectives supplied, of course, the bulk of this grain. All these factors tended to reduce the amount of the income available for distribution among members. Hence ridiculously small cash payments to collective farmers, which were pilloried by the Kremlin and the controlled press in the spring of 1938. The situation has been greatly aggravated by that chronic malady of the Soviet economic system, the "goods famine" and the high, sometimes fantastically high prices of manufactured goods. If this problem is acute in the cities, it is even more so in rural areas to which, on the whole, a smaller stream of manufactured goods is directed by the government which owns the manufacturing industry. In 1935, for instance, the turnover of manufactured goods (nonfoodstuffs) was nearly twice as much in urban than in rural retail trade.

Of course, the collective farmer is paid not only in cash but, what

is far more important, in kind, principally in grain, which he may sell on the private market or even to the government on a commercial basis. But grain distribution in collectives varies with the outturn of the crop, a matter regarding which the weather has much to say. Little grain, for instance, was distributed in 1936, when weather conditions over a large area were unfavorable and crop yields poor; while in 1937, when the situation was the reverse, grain distribution reached substantial proportions. In 1938 and 1939 weather again was anything but generous to the Russian farmer, which will doubtless be reflected in figures of grain distribution if and when they are published. Thus even in good seasons the peasant must hold on to most of the grain, the principal article of his diet, to provide a reserve for the dreaded contingency of crop failure, which is a frequent occurrence, especially in the extensive semiarid zone of the U. S. S. R.

Is it surprising that under such conditions collective farmers tried to supplement their family earnings by outside occupations or by concentrating on their own kitchen gardens, where they might grow products that brought fairly good prices on the market in the near-by town? The natural result of such a situation was that collective fields were often neglected and an artificial shortage of labor was created during the busy season. This, it is claimed, led to the employment in collectives of the so-called "individual" (noncollectivized) peasants who were paid a higher rate than the members of collectives with the obvious detrimental effects on the morale and working discipline of the latter.

New remedial measures were prescribed in the spring of 1938 by the Kremlin, such as absolute prohibition of mass purges in collectives, speedy restoration of those who were illegally expelled to their former status, and reiteration or strengthening of other safeguards of the rights of collectivized peasantry. The most far-reaching measure, however, was the categorical requirement that 60 to 70 per cent of all cash income of the collectives be distributed among the membership and that capital expenditures be limited to 10 per cent of the cash income instead of the former limit of from 10 to 20 per cent, which nevertheless was frequently exceeded. During the whole summer and autumn of 1938 the controlled Soviet press continued enthusiastically to reverberate this new outburst of appeasement, "The Stalinist Care for the Collectivized Peasantry" as it was called. Sud-

denly the appeasement policy was halted early in December, 1938, with the abandonment of the requirement that not less than 60 to 70 per cent of the cash income of collectives be distributed among members. Similarly, the limit for capital expenditures was increased from a maximum of 10 to 12-15 per cent in grain regions and 15-20 per cent in regions where industrial crops or livestock farming predominates. Thus the heart was taken out of the promising reform of the preceding April, and collective farmers reverted to their former status of merely residual claimants to the income of the collective.

When a few months later in the spring of 1939 the XVIII Communist Party Congress assembled for the first time in five years, the official keynote was not that of appeasement on the agrarian front but rather what looked suspiciously like a new offensive. At that Congress Premier Molotov and A. A. Andreev, the latter a member of the powerful Politbureau and the *rapporteur* on the agricultural situation, both complained of collective farmers who do not really work on the collective farms or work a little "for show" only and use the collectives as a screen to avoid taxation. They scored the excessive development of personal farming by the collective farmers on their little kitchen garden plots which "in some places began to outgrow the collectivized economy and became the basic part, while collective farming on the contrary became secondary." Faulty distribution of income as the central cause of such phenomena, much emphasized a year earlier, was apparently forgotten. No concrete measures to "remedy" the situation were proposed at the time. But when Andreev, concluding his speech, said that it was necessary "to liquidate the useless practice (not needed by anyone) of nonintervention into the internal life of the collectives and replace it by constant care and help to the collective farmers" and "it must be realized that collectives need serious guidance and wish this guidance from us"—his words had a rather ominous ring to those who could read between the lines of Soviet pronouncements.

It was not necessary to wait long for these suspicions to materialize. On May 27, 1939, an important decree was issued by the Kremlin, without any discussion in the official Soviet Parliament that was assembled at the time, which aimed to restrict alleged expansion of the personal farming by the collective farmers. A new land survey in the collectives was ordered during the summer of 1939, and all

land found to be personally used by peasants in excess of the prescribed legal limits that varied between 0.6 and 1.25 and, more rarely, 2.5 acres per household, was to be taken away from the peasants. Likewise plots allotted to those who had not worked continuously in the collectives were to be forfeited. The common fields of the *kolkhoz* were to be segregated from personal plots of collective farmers, and the common area was under no circumstances to be reduced again without the government's permission. Where as a result of this a shortage of land available for allotment as kitchen gardens to collective farmers developed, migration to sparsely settled regions was recommended. Collective farmers who had homesteads outside of the village (the so-called *khutor*) as was sometimes the case in the Ukraine, Belorussia, and other western regions, were to be speedily moved into the villages where presumably they would be easier to control.

The tax on earnings of collective farmers from private sources was considerably increased. Measures were also taken to strengthen collective animal husbandry that has been the Achilles's heel of collectivized agriculture, in which most of the stock except horses were in individual possession of collective farmers. Chief of these measures was characteristically a change in the basis on which animal products were delivered as taxes in kind to the state. Formerly they were in proportion to the number of head in the collective herd; now they are based on the number of collective acres. Finally, the setting up of a minimum number of "labor days" a year to be worked by each able-bodied member of the collective irrespective of sex (not by each family) was "recommended" by the Kremlin, and those who fall below the minimum are to be expelled.

The last provision and comments in the Soviet press give a real clue to the central motive behind this new "enclosure" campaign. It is probably not so much the fear of the Kremlin that an excessive area of land is cultivated by the collective farmers for their personal use. After all, the whole crop area personally held by collective farmers constituted in the aggregate a little over thirteen million acres in 1938 as against two hundred ninety million acres of collectivized crop area. And in the U. S. S. R. crop acreage is counted very carefully because it constitutes the basis for assessment of taxes in kind. It is rather the extra labor of the peasant that is coveted by

the Kremlin, not only for work on collective farms, but also for the development of such distant regions as the Far East, for instance, and for running Soviet factories, mines, forests, and construction works that may experience a shortage of labor. It is not for nothing that Stalin "begged" the collectivized peasantry at the XVIII Party Congress in March, 1939, to give industry, now that Soviet agriculture has the blessings of mechanization, one million, five hundred thousand new workers annually. Parenthetically, it should be borne in mind that inefficient methods of organization and work tend to increase labor requirements in Russian industry and agriculture as compared with the West. A conspicuous example in farming is the prodigious effort spent on weeding fields, the infestation of which was due largely to inefficient cultivation in the first instance. Thus, much of the advantage of the newly introduced labor-saving machinery is lost.

Naturally, the more limited the plot of land and the fewer the number of animals that a peasant possesses, the less is the competition with collective fields and livestock for his labor and the greater his dependence on the collectivized agriculture or state industry. Consequently the peasant may become a more compliant worker in spite of what is often, as we saw above, very low remuneration. Still, the Kremlin has not risked as yet eliminating altogether supplementary small personal farming on the part of the collective farmers. For the time being, perhaps out of fear of endangering the food supply of the population, it has pursued the policy of restriction rather than of "liquidation." In this connection, it is significant that personal farming of collective farmers accounted, according to official estimates, for over a fifth of the total 1937 Soviet gross farm production.

It should occasion no surprise, however, when such a step toward further collectivization is taken by the Kremlin, even though it may very well be preceded by yet another temporary swing of pendulum in the direction of a more liberal attitude toward personal farming of the collective farmers or the autonomy of the *kolkhoz*. In fact, a recent decree, which gave the collectives somewhat greater freedom in the choice of the crops to be planted, may be a straw pointing the way the wind is blowing. But one can never tell. In spite of the zigzagging tactics, however, the grip which the Soviet state acquired

over Russian peasant agriculture ten years ago through the collectivist revolution and mechanization has become increasingly tighter, while the promise of abundant life and freedom for the masses as distinguished from classes or individuals, is yet to be fulfilled.

Will the peasantry of the newly acquired Ukrainian and Belorussian provinces escape this iron grip? Will the agrarian revolution that is taking place there stop merely with the partition of estates of Polish landowners and of the holdings of the Polish colonists planted by Warsaw, and distribution of land among the needy peasants? Perhaps, yes, for a time, while the international conjuncture is so uncertain and war clouds hang on the horizon. Russian peasants, it will be recalled, also received a respite for a few years during the N.E.P. But once the Kremlin is safely in the saddle in the new regions, it is bound to proceed with agricultural collectivization on a large scale. For it is hardly conceivable that half of the rural Ukraine and Belorussia should be collectivized and the other half allowed to remain individualistic. It was no less an authority than Lenin himself who, in charting the course of the agrarian revolution more than thirty years ago, laid down the maxim that it could not stop short of socialism. Certainly, the unremitting zeal of the Kremlin to stamp out the remnants of peasant individual farming[2] by strong doses of discriminatory taxation and other impediments does not augur well for toleration of a dichotomy in agrarian structure of the newly acquired parts of the Soviet Empire. How agrarian collectivism, Soviet style, will appeal to the peasants of the former Polish provinces, who, if anything, are more individualistic than the Great Russian peasants, one need not be a prophet to foretell.

[2] In 1937 there were 1.4 million individual peasant households and 18.5 million households in 243,700 collective farms. In 1929 there were 24.6 million individual peasant households and one million households in 57,000 collective farms.

JAMES NORMAN HALL: POET AND PHILOSOPHER

MURRAY D. WELCH

MOST READERS who know of James Norman Hall think of him as an associate of Charles A. Nordhoff and co-author of three interesting sea tales, *Mutiny on the Bounty*, *Men against the Sea*, and *Pitcairn Island*. My object in writing this article is to show that, in addition to being a co-author of tales of adventure, Hall is one of the outstanding poets and philosophers of today. This side of Hall cannot be seen in his tales of adventure and can only be gleaned from his far too few books, magazine articles, and letters. His early writings, however, do not have the same poetic and philosophical qualities as appear in his later works written after he went to Tahiti. This quiet retreat perhaps became his inspiration.

"Jimmie" Hall, as he was known at Grinnell College, where he was graduated in 1910, was born in Colfax, Iowa. He refers to his native town in his writings as Prairie Hills. He spent four years in social work in Boston. The opening of the World War found him in England enlisting with Kitchener's Mob. Four years were passed in and out of the war, fighting under the English, French, and American flags. He came out of the war an Ace with several medals and decorations. He was permitted to escape from a German prison camp at the signing of the Armistice.

In 1920 he and Nordhoff sought the South Sea Islands as a place "for quiet retreat," and except for brief trips to North America and a year in Iceland, he has remained in the Low Islands, as he is wont to call them. Nordhoff is still there working with him. Hall married the daughter of an English naval officer; they now have three children and live in the hills near Papeete, Tahiti.

I last saw Hall when we lunched together in New York City in 1929. At that time he had tried unsuccessfully to market a war play written by him and Nordhoff. I have never seen it in print. Hall, then as brown as a berry, with close-cropped mustache, his hair sprinkled with gray, was quiet and soft-spoken with a wistful look in his eye as he talked of returning to Papeete.

His writings can definitely be placed in three categories—books of adventure, poetry, and philosophy. His poetry and philosophy are written in prose and verse. He would probably be the most surprised of all who know him to hear himself called a philosopher.

He has been writing since his youth. One of his early poems is still used as the Alma Mater song of Grinnell College, where he received his bachelor of arts degree in 1910. He has no conceit about his writings. In a letter to me he wrote: "I am not sufficiently proud of my literary efforts to give you a list of them. Some are out of print and it is to be regretted that others that might be mentioned are not in the same category."

Hall's poetry and philosophy of life are built with emotion, whim, color, texture, glamor, and are the products of reverie. His whimsical moods are irresistible. A portrait of Hall and his philosophy of life could never be finished, hardly be put on canvas. His philosophy is a product of the heart and cannot be canalized with lines nor cramped with words, subjects and verbs.

Hall does not think in the abstract: sounds are seen, time is three-dimensional, sunshine is rain, color is music. We see this when he writes as follows:

> . . . and when a mynah bird, hidden in the deep shade of a mango tree, drops a single drowsy chirp into the pool of silence beneath him, I see the silver splash it makes, and the circles moving smoothly outward over the placid surface. And I hear, as distinctly, the barbaric music of color which comes from every roadside garden; . . . .
>
> For all this weird music, I am aware of the deepening noonday stillness. The bell in the cathedral clock-tower, striking the quarter-past, tries vainly to fathom it, and wider and deeper yet in the sea of silence. . . .
>
> It [sunlight] drips from the fronds of the palms, spills in rivulets from broad-leaved banana trees, and runs in bright drops down the stems of the grasses.[1]

In his "quiet retreat" Hall seeks solitude, but not the solitude of a recluse. Solitude to him means: "I had time, as well, for those periods of reverie so refreshing to the spirit; one comes out of them feeling renewed, reborn and seems to leave behind a scaly integument like the cast-off skin of a snake."[2] His solitude is not loneliness. It

[1] *Mid-Pacific* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1928), p. 297. The quotations in this article are printed with the permission of the publishers.

[2] "From Med to Mum," *Atlantic Monthly*, CLIII, 261 (March, 1934).

is the flint which strikes the fire of his imagination: "I have come back today feeling so spiritually refreshed that it seems to me now that nothing could ever disturb, or depress, or sadden me again. These baths of solitude bring me a profound peace of mind and heart."[3]

His solitude has emotional qualities. The solitude of the tropics is awe-inspiring and at times forbidding, while the solitude of the frozen North is warm and welcome. We see this when he contrasts the solitude of Iceland with that of the South Seas:

> I have often wondered why it is that tropical solitude is so much harder to endure than the unfrequented places of the North. . . . A gray, misty northern sea with never a sail on it is nothing like so lonely as a tropical sea, bright and blue and sparkling in the afternoon sunshine. . . . The warm mellow sunlight of the North has in it something consoling and friendly, and the sky seems not so far away. In the tropics it is otherwise. There high noon is a fearfully expressive term. High noon it is in all truth—high beyond the furtherest reach of fancy, ...[4]

Who has plumbed the qualities of sadness as Hall?

> Never elsewhere have I so richly enjoyed being sad. There was nothing of gloom or depression in the feeling. It was not a human kind of sadness, but a cosmic melancholy drawn from mountains and stones, from lakes and fjords, born of the sound of great rivers, of the thunder of mighty waterfalls, of the moaning of the sea around desolate headlands, of the deep, vibrant hum of the wind blowing from the fastnesses of the North. . . .[5]

Despite a certain untouchable quality of the solitude of the tropics, he welcomes it: "Isolation is made tangible by thousands of miles of unfrequented sea stretching away on every side; you know that it can't be easily violated. . . ."[6]

Solitude for Hall is not for the purpose of withdrawing from the world. For him it is the wellspring for those who experience it for "Great lights dawn upon them during their lonely meditations. They are seized by great convictions or great doubts and to share these is as necessary to them as breathing."[7]

[3] "Conversations on an Island," *Atlantic Monthly*, CXLIV, 343 (Sept., 1929).
[4] *Mid-Pacific*, p. 94.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 291.
[6] "Conversations on an Island," *op. cit.*, CXLIV, 345.
[7] "Why I Live in Tahiti," *Atlantic Monthly*, CXXXVII, 466 (April, 1926).

Hall is cautious of his "baths of solitude," for in writing of a character called Crichton he remarks that "One might love solitude at a distance and long to know it intimately; but the heart of it was too vast surely for one poor human waif to snuggle against with impunity or to attempt to explore in the search of the secret of its peace."[8] They have brought to Hall peace of mind and have colored and heightened his imagination and made it wistful, majestic, tinted, lonely. He describes an atoll: "These oases in mid-ocean have all the beauty of those in mid-desert, but one needs music to describe them. Chopin if ever he had seen a coral island such as Timoe would have carried it away with him in the manuscript, ..."[9] He senses the stillness before a storm as "something beyond mere soundlessness . . ."[10] and gives dimension to sound in describing the silence of Iceland: "Here they [sounds] seem, somehow, to demand attention, as one measures the immensity of a plain by the minute figure of a horseman crossing it."[11] Time for him has body and life. He describes the sound of a clock on a lonely isle: "The silence was too profound for any such noisy piece of furniture. I could all but hear the steady drip, drip, drip of the minutes and the tiny splash they made as they fell into the sea of time past."[12]

He paints with cosmic strokes when describing the Northern Lights: "It was light translated, spiritualized, the blown dust of stars swept from the floor of the Milky Way by the wind between the worlds and carried along the sky in billowing clouds . . . old rose, amethyst, pale yellow, apple green, subsiding slowly only to gather greater height, or to be dashed high and far in silvery spume against some dead world drifting viewless there."[13]

The sea, the surf, the moon of the South Seas, have all woven themselves into his fabric. He described a night in Tahiti: "So ends the day. I am writing this in my notebook by the light of a fire of cocoanut husks. There is not a sound to be heard but the eternal booming of the surf. . . . The others have gone to bed, but I can't bring myself to follow them. Such a night as this was not meant for

[8] "The Forgotten One," *Atlantic Monthly*, CXXXV, 300 (March, 1925).
[9] "Castaway," *Atlantic Monthly*, CLIII, 708 (June, 1934).
[10] "The Last Leg," *Atlantic Monthly*, CLIV, 101 (July, 1934).
[11] "An Autumn Sojourn in Iceland," *Harper's Magazine*, CXLVIII, 186 (Jan., 1924).
[12] "The Forgotten One," *op. cit.*, CXXXV, 298.
[13] "The Enchantment of the Icelandic Wild," *Travel*, XLVI, 48 (Feb., 1926).

sleep."[14] As he listens to the booming of the surf he writes: "Beyond lay the barrier reef, where the surf piling up in smooth combers broke evenly, with a reverberating boom, followed by a long drawn out sigh as the sea foamed over the shallows to the beach."[15] More of the sea: "In the trancelike calm of earth and air I was conscious again of the beating of the surf upon the reef. Now it was measured, regular, as though it were the pulsing of the blood through the mighty heart of Solitude; now it seemed the confused roar of street traffic from a thousand cities mingled with the voices of all humankind, flowing smoothly, in soundless waves, in narrowing circles, over the rim of the world, to break, audibly at last on this minute ringed shoal in the farthermost sea of silence."[16] Again he pictures "a lagoon so calm that it seems a nether sky, with the white smoke of the Milky Way making a faint radiance in the water, like the blurred reflection of a streamer of moonlight cloud."[17]

See the lagoon in the atoll; see yon the fire; hear the music: "The Paumotuans themselves know best the natural setting for their songs—the lagoon beach with a great fire of cocoanut husks blazing in the center of a group of singers."[18] More of a lagoon: "Far below lay the floor of the lagoon where all the rainbows of the world have authentic end. The water was so clear, and the sunlight streamed through it with so little loss in brightness that one seemed to be suspended in mid-air above the forest of branching coral, the deep, cool valleys, and the wide, sandy plains of that strange continent."[19] The coral islands captivate him: "I could not tell you of the unimaginable beauty of these islands, though I were to write until doomsday."[20]

Writing of the inhabitants of the South Seas, he characterizes the whites as "without curiosity, the Orientals without desire, the natives without remembrance."[21] He further describes the natives as "often silent in the dreamy way of remote island people whose moods

[14] *Mid-Pacific*, p. 193.

[15] "Sir John, Miss Amy, Joseph and Charles," *Atlantic Monthly*, CXXIX, 751 (June, 1922).

[16] "The Forgotten One," *op. cit.*, CXXXV, 298.

[17] *Mid-Pacific*, p. 196.

[18] "Faery Lands of the Sea; Part II, In the Cloud of Islands," *Harper's Magazine*, CXLII, 61 (Dec., 1920). This series of articles was later printed in book form by Harper and Brothers: Charles Bernard Nordhoff and James Norman Hall, *Faerylands of the South Seas*.

[19] *Ibid.*, CXLII, 56.

[20] *Class Letter* (1924).

[21] "Faery Lands of the Sea," *Harper's Magazine*, CXLI, 692 (Nov., 1920).

are drawn from the sea, whose minds lie fallow to the peace and beauty of it."[22] He contrasts the gayety of the native of the South Seas with that of the white: "One is often puzzled at hearing natives laughing immoderately about something which would give a white man cause for only a faint smile; but most of us northerners with our impaired digestions, our regrets for yesterday and our anxieties for tomorrow, have long since forgotten how to laugh."[23]

Time in Tahiti is timeless to Hall: "It becomes, like the air, fluid, seemingly inexhaustible; you live in it and by it, but it never intrudes itself as something not to be wasted."[24]

After a visit to the Island of Tanao he says: "Despite the briefness of the first visit—of two days' duration only—I must have left a part of myself at Tanao, as it is said one does wherever one goes; and it is necessary at times to revisit these shadowy, fragmentary selves left behind as one grows older."[25] In this Hall expresses a Polynesian belief which he has written about in his recent book *The Purple River*. Polynesian words to him are distilled beauty: "Many words were like little poems, telling of the peace of starlight nights, of grateful noonday shade, of the sea in all its moods, of the shadows of clouds on grassy uplands."[26]

The spell of Tahiti has enmeshed and enthralled him. Leaving it for a trip causes him to write: "then I went at once to my cabin, in order that departure from the most beautiful of islands might be a little less poignant."[27] One can only say that Hall and the islands are fused.

The following gives us a clue to the plaintive, whimsical quality of his thoughts. In a letter to a friend he wrote: "Do you have whip-poor-wills where you are? What would I not give to hear one sing in the evening! My choice, for bird music, is mourning doves and meadow larks for daytime singing and whip-poor-wills for the nights. Here we have very few land birds, and none of the few we have sing. But we have the most beautiful sea birds and their motion in flight is really visible music."

[22] "Faery Lands of the Sea: Part IV, A Lonely Atoll," *Harper's Magazine*, CXLII, 373 (Feb., 1921).
[23] *Mid-Pacific*, p. 263.
[24] "Why I Live in Tahiti," *op. cit.*, CXXXVII, 464.
[25] "The Forgotten One," *op. cit.*, CXXXV, 290.
[26] *Mid-Pacific*, p. 246.
[27] "Sing: A Song of Sixpence," *Atlantic Monthly*, CXXXVI, 735 (Dec., 1925).

Hall's expressions of his philosophy of life are fragmentary and can only be gleaned from his writings and many letters. What expressions we have are cameolike in perfection. Of happiness he says: "Never be suspicious of happiness, nor question its validity. If you have it—good!"[28] After reading a book depicting men as vile creatures, he calls to mind his acquaintances thus:

> All kinds of men, both in and out of jail.
> No vermin, these, not one of them. Instead,
> Struggling creatures like myself I find.
> Some are maimed, it may be; some are weak
> Some are dwarfed and twisted by the bitter wind
> Of adverse fate; but those of whom I've read
> I never find, no matter where I seek.[29]

In another place he says, "men are nobler than their actions show."

Beauty, to Hall, is the exclusive property of poets: "Keats said that beauty is truth, and in a definition of the properties of beauty one would rather trust a poet's instinct than a philologist's reasoned deductions. If, therefore, glamor is beauty, and beauty is truth, how can it be delusive? The Oxford Dictionary must be in error."[30] In encouragement of a searcher for beauty he writes: "I hope that he has not abandoned his quest. But on what farthest star, I wonder, is the true home of the searcher for beauty, happiness and the free life."[31] Even solitude is exquisite beauty: "he is one of those men who love solitude as other men love beauty; that to him it is really a manifestation of beauty in its most ravishing, pitiless form."[32]

Hall is not senseless to the drab of life. At such times he resorts to books: "I have a sovereign cure for all the ills of the tropics, even in the rainy season. I open my book and no longer hear the shrill lament of frustrated mosquitoes, or the drumming of rain on the iron roof. Silence falls; night falls; Tahiti vanishes as though it had never been, and I find myself standing, knee deep in snow, near the cemetery of Saint John."[33] And "Books have, for me, a value beyond that of music or of odors as memorials of time and place."[34] He once

[28] "At Forty-five," *Atlantic Monthly*, CL, 306 (Sept., 1932).
[29] "In a Library," *Harper's Magazine*, CLXV, 551 (Oct., 1932).
[30] *Mid-Pacific*, p. 154.
[31] *Ibid.*, p. 125.
[32] "The Forgotten One," *op. cit.*, CXXXV, 290.
[33] *Mid-Pacific*, p. 162.
[34] "Sir John, Miss Amy, Joseph and Charles," *op. cit.*, CXXIX, 750.

said he had about seven hundred books and some of them "are in Paris, some in London, some in North Wales, some in Iowa, some in Iceland, some in Boston, and a good many in various islands of the South Pacific. When I want to re-read a particular one, I often have to make a considerable journey, but that is no hardship to a man who loves travelling."[35] Of members of his profession of writers he says: "We accumulate nothing but experience. We have enormous collections, but in the spacious attic where old memories are stored there is ample room for everything, whether rubbish or golden treasure."[36]

Concerning life he gives us this cameo: "life, to one born whole, is worth the living, well worth the taking, having and the giving."[37] He tells of himself and his philosophy of life by talking to his "familiar demon" and asks him: "I wish to be shown the man I might have been if I had never made a wrong decision of importance, if I had made the most of every opportunity that has come to me. Is love of ease of spirit an evidence of dry rot, or advancing age, or both? . . . Ease of spirit does not mean numbness or deadness of spirit. . . ."[38] He questions: "Where is the right place and when the precious moment? Here and now. We all know this with our minds; why can we not always be aware of it with the spirit? . . . We have the gift above all gifts, that of loving life here and now, even as it is. . . ."[39] And again tells his "demon": "Think of the freedom of a special kind one has here [Tahiti]; freedom from the influence of the mass mind, with its intolerance, its disregard for minority rights and opinions; its profound belief in material progress and in the idea that science will ultimately solve all the riddles of the universe. . . ."[40]

He confesses that as he grows older: "I shall read old books, sort over old memories, think of old friends, indulge myself in the gentle, half-melancholy reflections privileged to elderly men. My fishing will keep me healthy in body, and the humdrum existence we live on this beautiful island will keep me tranquil in mind. . . ."[41] Of this

[35] *Class Letter* (1924). [36] *Mid-Pacific*, p. 278.
[37] "A Starry Night at Arué," *Atlantic Monthly*, CXLIX, 561 (May, 1932).
[38] "At Forty-five," *op. cit.*, CL, 305.
[39] "The Voice," *Atlantic Monthly*, CLI, 579 (May, 1933).
[40] "Conversations on an Island," *op. cit.*, CXLIV, 348.
[41] *Ibid.*

tranquility of mind or leisure he writes: "Only a small number of men really want leisure. . . . Learn to be still—to sit or walk alone, say an occasional half hour, not thinking, not reading, with mind and body as quiet as he can make them. Let him practise this stillness (for this is difficult) night and morning, until he has its secret. And all for the sake of adventure, to see what would come of it, with no guarantee that anything would come except boredom. And boredom is all that would come of it in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred."[42] Idling and loafing for Hall are precursors to thought and creative work:

> Let any impartial man open "Walden" or a volume of his [Henry Thoreau's] Journals and, after reading for an hour or two, decide whether the fruits of his idleness were not at least as valuable to mankind as the fruits of their industry. . . . If idling is ever to regain its rightful position as one of the arts,—or, better, as the fostering mother of all the arts, there must be a change of attitude toward its professors and practitioners. . . . So far has the decay of loafing gone in the United States that I cannot think of a single eminent loafer of American birth since Walt Whitman's time. . . . Poets, the most distinguished of idlers, are such outwardly harmless containers of power, which makes them truly dangerous—not of themselves but because of the uses to which may be, and is, put the enormous energy of thought they throw off. . . . Our western world owed Francis Bacon an incalculable debt of obloquy for being the first great teacher of the fatal doctrine that all ideas may be put to practical use.[43]

None but a poet could express a great truth so succinctly as: "It was the old story over again of a man trying to find the material counterpart of a dream. It was the old story, too, of a man carrying his own little private hell, himself, with him wherever he went, and fondly hoping that a mere change of scene would somehow, miraculously transform it into a miniature Garden of Eden."[44]

What finer pearl of inspiration can be found than: "In each of us there is, perhaps, the gleam of an ability, a power, a gift, to do something a little better than someone else has done or could do it; or it may be only the faculty for feeling some emotion a little more keenly than another may feel it. . . . There is an old island saying.

[42] *Ibid.*, CXLIV, 344.
[43] "The Art of Loafing," *Atlantic Monthly*, CXLVIII, 59 (July, 1931).
[44] *Mid-Pacific*, p. 91.

. . . The sea shall murmur for him alone who knows how to listen. If you know or can learn to listen, I think you might be very happy here. . . ."[45] Hall has learned to listen.

Hall believes that the course of life cannot be steered by Reason alone. Let him tell us in verse:

> These my beliefs in eight and twenty lines
> . . . . . .
> That Reason is a rock no more than Feeling
> (Intuition is a safer guide);
> That those who make a god of Reason, kneeling
> Devout, are not the wholly sane, clear-eyed
> Beings they fondly think. . . .[46]

Occasionally Hall resorts to whimsical satire to portray his thought. In refusing to believe the latest thoughts of scientists as ultimate truth, he says:

> I sometimes wonder whether our thanks should not be expressed in the coolest possible manner, by a mere polite lifting of an eyebrow, or a barely perceptible shrugging of the shoulders, when one of them (astronomers) insists upon our enlarging our already more than adequate sense of the insignificance of the globe we inhabit. Why should we listen to the celestial prestidigitators who monopolize so much of our time, who distract our attention from our own proper affairs. . . . How can they be so sure, so soon? Or, if they are sure, why must they tell us about their findings? . . . They entice the unwary to their mountain fastnesses and there bewitch them with awe-inspiring instruments of magic; or failing that, having translated some of their latest songs and legends into vulgar speech, they rush down en masse and scatter among us books and pamphlets and other celestial propaganda which we are foolish enough to read. Whenever we see them coming we should do well, in my opinion, to draw our imaginative faculties in out of harm's way, for they appear to think that ours, like their own, are of infinite elasticity. Give the gentlest of them an inch and he will take fifty million light years before you can draw breath to protest.[47]

In an article appearing in the *Bookman* for March, 1933, he contrasts thoughts and words suggesting that words are disciplined or

[45] *Ibid.*, p. 247.
[46] "A Starry Night at Arué," *op. cit.*, CXLIX, 561.
[47] "The Last Leg," *Atlantic Monthly*, CLIV, 96 (July, 1934).

enslaved thoughts. He says that when we read an author we know merely what he wrote but do not know what he thought.

I hope that current royalties to him and Nordhoff on their books of adventure and the sale of the movie rights have not changed his philosophical and poetic imagination. Before the publication of his current books he wrote: "If it were true that a man's wealth may be estimated in terms of the things he can do without, then in that sense, I might hope soon to achieve affluence."[48] When I wrote him some time ago for a list of his works, in his reply he said: "I give you carte blanche, Murray, to say anything you please about my past life, and if you see fit to make a whale out of this minnow, it will be jake with me. . . ."

It is to be regretted that a collection of his lesser known writings has not been made. I have only hinted at their poetry of expression. In them he has woven an irresistible spell about the South Sea Islands. He has shown the power of solitude and reverie. He proves that for him reverie is not loafing but rather a germination period. Maybe it would do the same for us. The pity is that Hall has written so little. Would that he were inspired to give us more of his wistful, fanciful, wandering thoughts; thoughts that are scented, tinted, that suggest the inarticulate; thoughts that are routed through the heart rather than the brain.

[48] "Sing: A Song of Sixpence," *op. cit.*, CXXXVI, 729.

"THE GOOD SOCIETY" IN IRELAND*

ARTHUR W. BROMAGE AND MARY C. BROMAGE

THE FIRST question asked of any government today is whether it is democratic or dictatorial. A new state at once becomes suspect. The Irish people adopted a new constitution in 1937, in accordance with which the State of Eire succeeded the old Irish Free State. Vague charges of authoritarianism have been directed at Eamon de Valera—"the unique dictator" as one of his biographers calls him. In itself, absolutism is no new political ill, but its recurrence after a period of quiescence now makes it conspicuous.

Centuries of English overlordship accustomed the Irish people to an absolutist regime. The English rulers did their best to civilize Ireland according to their ideas, and it is many centuries since the Irishman was allowed to express his individuality unmolested. In 1518 it was enacted that "neither O nor Mac shall strutte ne swaggere thro the strees of Galway." Edmund Spenser, in the same century, found fault with the mantles worn by the natives, the trim of their beards, the very way the women sat on horseback. Though the Irish people never succumbed to the process of Anglicization, they transferred their hopes and aspirations from the field of practical or political endeavor to that of spiritual or mystical satisfaction. When, in the twentieth century, a handful of willing martyrs at last threw off the British yoke, political and economic chaos followed upon their revolution. The Treaty of 1921 with England, which was far from universally acceptable in Ireland, precipitated civil dissension. Fratricide and wide destruction prolonged the débâcle.

Gaelic culture—the product of an inextinguishable racial entity—has survived a succession of conquests—Norse, Danish, English. During the Dark Ages, Ireland, a dot of land on the periphery of the known world, was the stronghold of learning. Recollection of Ireland's "golden age," symbolized by the Tara Brooch, the Book of Kells, the Ardagh Chalice, has quickened the country's national consciousness when transpiring events would have killed it. Native

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tradition and culture is quite out of proportion to land, wealth, or power. With the language of ancient Ireland proscribed, the teaching of native history forbidden, local trade stamped out, Irishmen did not lose their will to self-determination. Irish nationalism as a bona fide cause might well have been the starting point of dictatorship.

The new Irish constitution now in force refers at the outset to the Irish "nation," the first articles being devoted to that while the following take up the Irish "state." In this way Irish nationalism is recognized as preceding Irish statehood. Although the territory of the state is declared to consist of the whole island, the actual partition of Ireland today into the six counties of Northern Ireland and the twenty-six counties of the old Free State made necessary the inclusion of this condition: "Pending reintegration of the national territory" the laws of the new State of Eire are to "have the like area and extent of application as the laws of Saorstát Eireann. . . ." Irish nationalism at present submits to this territorial partition because the obstacles placed in the path of unity by the Protestant-Unionists in Northern Ireland, still under English rule, are formidable. Nationalism persists undaunted in the face of geographical dismemberment.

Given the ingredients which have produced dictatorship elsewhere—revolution, civil war, economic upheaval, resurgent nationalism—what has been the result in Ireland? The country was not lacking in a leader with the requisite personal qualifications. Eamon de Valera possesses a military background in his record during "the troubles" extending from Easter Week of 1916 to the end of the civil war in 1923. Reprieved from sentence of death after the Rising, he later escaped from an English jail to return to Ireland. This part of his history is equaled only by the tragic role he felt forced to play in the post-Treaty insurrection. In unalterable disagreement with the Treaty signers, he resigned as president of the temporary Republic's government and once again "the troubles" beset Ireland. Defeated in resort to arms but inveterate in opposition to William T. Cosgrave and the Treaty party, it was not until 1927 that de Valera and his Fianna Fáil party consented to take seats in the Free State's legislature as the legal opposition. When Fianna Fáil came to power by defeating Cosgrave's Cumann na nGaedheal party

in 1932, de Valera's leadership came into its own. As an orator, he spellbinds his listeners, although he speaks not in riddles but in complicated periods. It is the aloofness and apparent mystery of the man which at once arouses the admiration of his adherents and the fury of his opponents.

De Valera has always played a lone hand and his government is made up of adherents rather than advisers. If he has become a legend it is no will of his own, for he employs none of the costuming and stage properties of dictatorship. His reputation for solitude is due to absorption with his task and desire for the privacy of family life. A dictator rides to power on the waves of a crisis. From Cincinnatus to Vargas, a real or an alleged national emergency has been the excuse for turning the government over to one man, a strong man who could save the day. The crisis may be a genuine one or it may not be, and it is when this crisis is not a crucial one or when it is unduly prolonged that dictatorship becomes vicious. The means to the end becomes the end itself. Given a legitimate crisis, stigma does not so readily attach itself to extraordinary governmental powers. In Ireland, the existence of an emergency—of a succession of emergencies—is undeniable. The Rising of 1916, subsequent execution of its leaders, guerilla warfare, Black and Tan raiding, and internal strife leave no doubt as to the reality of the Irish crisis.

In such an upheaval, Irishmen found themselves without native political institutions and inexperienced in governmental matters. The country felt the need of strong leadership. By a firm hand she had to be guided along the ways of a world from which she had long been excluded. Strong leadership is possible without authoritarianism, and this is what Cosgrave from 1922 to 1932 supplied. When de Valera took over the reins of government in 1932, his objectives lay beyond those of the Cosgrave regime. So powerful is the resurrected Irish national spirit today that any failure to do it full justice may lead to further violence and demands for dictatorship. The power of de Valera's leadership lies in the fact that he is a man with an ideal—the ideal of an independent, self-sufficient, and united Ireland. It is in accord with this ideal or plan that the country is being governed. It does not, however, involve coercion or violence, nor is it international in scope like Fascism and Communism. For de Valera, "the state" as reiterated in the constitution is a responsible

body subject to the law of the majority. The new *Bunreacht* (constitution) repeatedly refers matters to further control "by law." This does not mean that affairs are to be decided by a dictator's fiat or even by an executive council, since it is the law of the Oireachtas (parliament) to which the constitution refers.

In the true dictatorship, religion necessarily assumes a negligible place. There cannot be two divinities where the creed of the state is paramount. The dictator can tolerate no rivals, human or superhuman. De Valera remains one of the most devout Catholics in Ireland, and there is no conflict between Church and State. The fallacy of dictatorship, which attributes unlimited scope to the leader, is human finitude. The new Irish constitution, on the other hand, not only specifically recognizes the Roman Catholic Church and other existing denominations, but stresses subservience to divine authority.

When the new constitution was presented to the Dáil (lower house) for debate in 1937, the opposition singled out for attack the new office of a popularly elected president, Uachtáran na hEireann (to be distinguished from the former president of the executive council who now bears the title of prime minister). According to a statement made by William T. Cosgrave at that time: "The powers given to the new President are given at the expense of the parliament and people, and may seriously hamper their right to put their wishes into effect. In practice may not the exercise of these powers prove inconsistent with democratic institutions?" When opposition newspapers fanned the flame of argument against an alleged dictatorship, de Valera took cognizance of the situation and warned the people that they would be told that the new president would have great powers of appointment. "The head of the Government [prime minister] is selected by the Dáil and the President has no power to appoint anyone else except the person chosen by the Dáil. The President appoints the other Ministers. He puts his signature to the paper, but does he select them? He does not. . . . His function is merely to give formal approval to the appointments." "I hope," he continued, "that disposes of the suggestion of dictatorial power in regard to appointments. But the President is vested with supreme control of the Army, the critics say. Yes, but in the next sentence of the Constitution you are told, he can exercise that control only in accordance with law, which will prescribe how that power will be

controlled by the Executive Government, the Government selected by the Dáil."

Save for one instance, the president, as titular executive, acts only upon the advice of his prime minister or other governmental agencies as in all parliamentary systems. "But there is one exception under the new Constitution where it is in his absolute discretion to refuse to act on such advice," said the *Irish Press*, "and that is where it is tendered to him to the effect that he should dissolve the elective chamber by An Taoiseach [prime minister] who has ceased to retain a majority in it. Obviously, the object of this provision is to safeguard the rights of the opposition for the time being, as it would prevent a minority Government from going to the country and 'making the election'. . . ." The president may in certain cases call for a popular referendum on bills of national importance, but this can be done only when the two houses of the legislature disagree. There must be a petition from a majority of the members of the senate and from not less than one third of the members of the lower house. In other words, when a majority of the senate and a substantial minority of the Dáil disagree with the majority action of the Dáil, then the president may refer the bill to the people.

The president is prohibited from seeking re-election more than once; he may not be simultaneously a member of the Oireachtas; he may not hold any other office or emolument; he is subject to impeachment. His power to sign and promulgate bills is formal. He may not address any message to the nation without consultation of the council of state and approval of the government.

It was first assumed that de Valera would be the new president of Eire, the opposition surmising that he had designed the office for himself. However, shortly before the plebiscite in the summer of 1937, he disposed of this idea: "It was stated in the newspapers and elsewhere that I was to be the new President. If my will is to be the determining factor in the matter . . . I will stay where I am [i.e., as president of the executive council in the Saorstát or in the parallel office of prime minister in Eire] doing the sort of work I have been doing for the past five years." This announcement stole the thunder from the charges of dictatorship based on the powers given the new, nominal executive.

The new office of prime minister is somewhat less powerful than

that which de Valera relinquished. As president of the executive council of Dáil Eireann and leader of an independent majority in the one-house legislature, he was stronger than the Taoiseach (prime minister) can ever hope to be under the *Bunreacht*. The powers of delay granted to the new senate and the limited powers given to the president could in some measure check the prime minister under a weak government. The ability of the former president of the executive council to act on quick decisions is checked when the action of a majority in the Dáil may be delayed by deliberations of an upper house.

Although Ireland is by no means collective in the full sense of the word, the government has undertaken a certain amount of economic planning. A separate section of the *Bunreacht*, entitled *Directive Principles of Social Policy*, declares that "The State shall favour and, where necessary, supplement private initiative in industry and commerce." This not only suggests the future trend but it describes the program which has already been put into operation in Ireland. The original motive in the government's program for industry and agriculture was not aggrandizement of power, but rather political independence and "the common good." In addition to the world-wide depression, Ireland's difficulties were for six years complicated by an economic war with England.

Although Irish independence was partially established by the Treaty of 1921 with England, perplexing disputes remained between the two countries. Among them was the payment of land annuities by Irish farmers to the English. So long as William T. Cosgrave was the head of the Irish Free State, these were paid to England by agreement. After Eamon de Valera came to power in 1932 he withheld the annuities. When England retaliated by placing special import duties on Irish produce, the Saorstát in turn restricted English imports by means of quotas and prohibitive duties. These measures made it hard for Irish farmers to sell their cattle across the Irish Sea, and made it expensive if not impossible for them to buy English goods at home. The outcome was an economic war which lasted until the Anglo-Irish Agreements of 1938. The trade barrier between the two countries caused greater disruption in Ireland than it would have in a country where native industry stood ready to supply the normal demands for manufactured goods.

For centuries the Irish people, the majority of whom have been agricultural, occupied themselves with raising livestock and food products for export to England and for home consumption. While certain sections of the small island could have produced a variety of vegetables and dairy produce, the explanation of the undiversified output lies either in lack of native initiative or in repressive tactics. On the industrial side, the answer is more evident. The conversion of Ireland to English interests kept that country as a grazing ground for cattle and as a market for manufactured products. This policy England sought to impose by alternate force and suasion, neither of which methods was pursued consistently enough to be successful. Irish history is punctuated by a succession of treaties more and less respected by England and Ireland alike. Less than a hundred years ago, the *Irish Quarterly Review* summed up the situation with the eloquence of indignation: "Notwithstanding the fertility of the native land, the Irish farmer's life is a struggle with beggary; riches are around him, but poverty is beside him. . . . We do not believe that Ireland is poor owing to any fault of her own people, but owing to the foul fault of English statesmen, and political charlatans . . . foreign ships bore to the shores of this kingdome of Ireland the very species of freight which is the destruction of Ireland's only hope . . . the imports of breadstuffs. . . . Our people fly to all points of the globe from famine or the poorhouse. . . . The landlords have been beggared, the poor have been slaughtered, the country has been in one place a lazaretto, in another a vast poorhouse. . . . And this decrease [in population] is the result of bad government, of misrule, of Manchester and Brummagem quackery."

In the campaign to make Ireland self-supporting, which was a concomitant of the struggle for political independence, Free State leaders found it necessary to start at the beginning. The industrial revolution occurred in England more than a century ago, while the industrial revolution in Ireland, if such it can be called, is only now taking place. The inexperience of Irish workers in manufacturing and the efficiency of the English neighbor stunted and discouraged development of Ireland's own skills, until the prohibitive tariff on English goods compelled Ireland to supply her own demands. To industrialize an agricultural population, Ireland imported workers of foreign skills. To create the Shannon Scheme of hydro-electric power

at Ardnacrusha, a German colony was imported. When the machinery of a sugar-beet factory south of Dublin broke down in 1936, it was necessary to close it until engineers could be summoned from Czechoslovakia. The employees of a new cotton factory were first trained by Belgians, and the hat factory set up in Galway boasts of Parisian models.

In addition to inexperience, Irish industry must overcome a certain distinterest in the material aspects of life. Dubliners even today do not make much of creature comforts. Imperviousness to the nonessentials of living was fostered during the years when the country was tied to the apron strings of English industry. Whatever initiative was manifested by individual Irish entrepreneurs was absorbed by English business. The preoccupation of Ireland has necessarily been not with this life but with the next. In Roman Catholicism lay the one hope of salvation, and the Church turned the eyes of the people from this life to the next.

The de Valera program has been a constant and rapid drive to convert Ireland from its dual position as an exporter of livestock and livestock products and importer of English-manufactured goods into a more self-reliant position. He has encouraged the growing of wheat by a government-guaranteed price which the millers must pay. The tillage of sugar beets has been developed and four beet-sugar factories put into operation. The Land Commission has been engaged in purchasing large farms (sometimes called ranches) and in resettling laborers or poor farmers on the twenty- to thirty-acre holdings into which these larger tracts have been subdivided. The inducements to tillage and the establishment of people on small farms have been intended to promote employment in agriculture. A program of reforestation looks forward to a future supply of native timber. To balance these agricultural developments a program setting up small factories and protecting them by tariff walls has been followed. The infant industries (and there are about nine hundred of them) are chiefly those needed to meet immediate necessities: boot factories, canning plants, clothing manufacturies, cement and furniture concerns. Another means of assisting Irish labor in the quest for new jobs has been to require the packing or assembling in Ireland of goods or manufactured articles, and to make it prohibitive to import such commodities otherwise. This policy combined with the eco-

nomic war to work considerable hardship on the farmers. Tariff repercussions diminished their ability to sell livestock and livestock products in England. At the same time the campaign of industrialization boosted the prices to be paid by all classes for various categories of finished products.

The very lack of material skill and of economic self-interest while impeding de Valera's plans at the same time worked to their benefit. For it was possible for a few years (from 1932 to 1938) to sacrifice whatever comforts English imports had provided to the immediate exigency of political strategy with regard to England. De Valera must have known that it could not long continue. The farmers could be held in line for a time with the idea that they must make compromises until England should accept Ireland's view on retaining the land annuities, on abolishing the oath of allegiance, on doing away with the governor-general, on removing the King from the constitution, and on establishing a self-defined position in the British Commonwealth of Nations. But even the farmers have limits to what they can endure in the name of a political-economic campaign. De Valera's opponents pressed demands for better living conditions, lower prices, entrance into the English market on favorable terms.

A step in advance was made during 1937 when the new constitution for Ireland was put into effect. This embodies de Valera's immediate political objectives, and it left Ireland associated with the British Commonwealth by statute alone. His Majesty's Government accepted this new document as not taking Ireland outside the Commonwealth, and so it was that de Valera went to London early in 1938. The result was the Anglo-Irish Agreements of that year. In accordance therewith, England agreed to take her forces from the Irish ports which they had held under the Treaty of 1921. The land-annuity dispute was settled by a lump-sum payment by Ireland of £10,000,000. The Government of the United Kingdom undertook to abolish the special duties imposed on Irish livestock and livestock products during the economic war. Ireland pledged that various orders imposed by the Irish Emergency Imposition of Duties Act, 1932, would be revoked; undertook through a Prices Commission to make a general review of Irish duties and import restrictions; and agreed to maintain certain preferences for specified products coming from the United Kingdom.

The boon to Irish farmers was immediately felt, for the throwing off of penal duties meant a re-entry into the English market. Each side carried out its pledges in good faith. Various classes of imports were forthwith reviewed by the Prices Commission at the request of the Minister for Industry and Commerce with consequent alterations in duties. An outburst of criticism against the modification effected by this part of the Agreements in the Irish government's protection of the home market came from the newly established Irish industries. These were at once reassured that the program of governmental backing for home industry would continue. As a matter of fact, the campaign to "Buy Irish," the emphasis on the label "Made in Eire" or "Packed in Eire," is as conspicuous since the 1938 Agreements as before. Almost equally conspicuous are the high prices still charged for foreign and domestic merchandise. The recommendations of the Prices Commission did not seriously jeopardize the development of embryo manufactories, although the industrial expansion which had been continuous since 1932 or 1933 slackened somewhat in 1938 after the Agreements. The official index to the cost of living showed a slight decline after conclusion of the Agreements. However, at the outbreak of European hostilities it had not fallen below the high level reached during the economic war. Artificial stimulation of industry is blamed for high taxes, restriction of trade, and prohibitive prices. The real rub will come if the end of partition removes the Border and thus exposes the baby industries of the South to competition from the mature manufactures of the North.

The metamorphosis which, since the achievement of Irish independence, has transformed the country from an exclusively agricultural civilization to one basically agricultural and partially industrial will not stop now. The government's attention to the interests of the urban worker, the provisions for social services, the legislation establishing hours of employment, holidays with pay and the like have found favor among the urban beneficiaries. The farmers are increasingly dissatisfied, however, and have held strikes in protest against their condition. The age-old prestige of agriculture as Ireland's sole *raison d'être* is at stake, and the country's youth is leaving the farm for the factory. Prices received for cattle, drastically cut by English import duties before the Agreements, have since im-

proved, but the agitation for credit to be extended to farmers as it has been to industrialists is rampant. The Opposition party has taken up the plight of rural Ireland.

Complete national self-sufficiency is by no means the goal today. Because of political complications, a leaning over backwards in favor of native goods has taken place. Although economic nationalism has accompanied authoritarianism in other states, it rose from a different origin in Ireland where it is a corollary of genuine political nationalism, a nationalism long thwarted from without. Far from being merely the policy of de Valera and the Fianna Fáil party, economic nationalism was long ago advocated by Sinn Fein and pushed forward slowly under Cosgrave's administration. The growth of city populations and a long-dormant slum problem has necessitated official housing schemes. In the attack of Irish central and local governments upon the slums lies further evidence of a will to create "the good society" in southern Ireland.

Conscious of Ireland's new national and international status, de Valera realized the need for a clear and decisive program. The Irish people—ardent patriots—have much to learn in practical administration of their own affairs. This realization influenced the new *Bunreacht* which, while it accords definite personal rights, also restricts these rights in the interests of "public order and morality." The liberal statement of personal rights originally made in the Free State constitution of 1922 was later superseded by the arbitrary restrictions of the Public Safety Act. During the administration of William T. Cosgrave, this act was made an integral part of the Free State constitution. Military tribunals could be set up with power to determine their own procedure, to hold trials, to pronounce sentence of death. Jurisdiction of these extraordinary courts extended over any offence deemed by a member of the government as "impairing or impeding the machinery of government. . . ." The police were given special powers to arrest on suspicion without warrant and by force. Associations were placed under special curbs, as were meetings and publications. The tribunals could padlock buildings.

These provisions did not appear in the new *Bunreacht*. Instead, the personal rights originally guaranteed in 1922 reappear, expressed in one unified section. Free expression of opinion can be restricted only within certain bounds; peaceable assembly without arms is pro-

claimed as a right; and private property, public education, and religious toleration are decreed. The *Bunreacht* specifies that limitations may be imposed by the state upon the exercise of these personal rights, however.

After guaranteeing the right of citizens to express freely their convictions and opinions, the new constitution continues: "The education of public opinion being, however, a matter of such grave import to the common good, the State shall endeavour to ensure that organs of public opinion such as the radio, the press, the cinema, while preserving their rightful liberty of expression, including criticism of Government policy, shall not be used to undermine public order or morality or the authority of the State." Censorship is not an innovation of de Valera's, but the new constitution has for the first time expressly formulated the state's constitutional right of supervision in this respect. The real basis of such censorship in Ireland is not primarily political as it is in authoritarian states, but moral.

The new document retained one vestige of the former Public Safety Act in an article making possible the setting up of special courts provided it is determined "by law" (not by executive decree as before) that the ordinary courts are "inadequate to secure the effective administration of justice, and the preservation of public peace and order." It therefore requires a majority of the members of Dáil Eireann to set up any special tribunal, and its procedure (heretofore determined by the court itself) is to be controlled by the Dáil. In accordance with this article of the constitution, a bill was passed in 1939 known as the Offences Against the State Act after recurrence of republican outbreaks in England and Northern Ireland. Usurpation of the functions of government, obstruction of the president, interference with military or other employees of the state, possession of treasonable documents, unauthorized military exercises, administration of unlawful oaths and membership in unlawful organizations are among the offences made punishable in special, criminal courts—establishment, procedure, and jurisdiction of which are set forth in the Act. In the same year, a measure known as the Treason Bill became law whereby treason became punishable with death, this penalty to apply upon conviction of Irish citizens or residents whether the treason be committed within or without the state.

In the past, the inexperience of Irishmen in practical affairs has

been considered a threat to their political freedom. Whatever the cause of this inaptitude, it has always been regarded by Englishmen as an inborn Celtic weakness, not one due to lack of opportunity in management of practical concerns. "It is not in the outward and visible world of material life that the Celtic genius of Wales or Ireland can at this day hope to count for much; it is in the inward world of thought and science." So spoke Matthew Arnold in 1883. Ernest Renan, part Celt himself, had a better understanding. Although he wrote that "It does not seem as though in any epoch it [the Celtic genius] has any aptitude for political life," yet he felt that it was because this realm had not been explored. "Who knows what it [the Celtic race] would produce in the domain of intellect, if it hardened itself to an entrance into the world?"

Ireland must today accomplish a readjustment of outlook. W. B. Yeats wrote in 1909: "You cannot keep the idea of a nation alive where there are no national institutions to reverence, no national success to admire, without a model of it in the mind of the people." To the contrary, the nation is now facing a new road, that of independence and responsibility in the world of affairs. Not only does Ireland find herself free and sovereign, but she finds herself without her greatest, single source of unanimity in the past: the struggle against England. Because of these factors, no weak and wavering government could hold the country to its chosen course. This realization led de Valera to create in Eire a powerful state wielding considerable authority over its citizens. A sentence appears in the new constitution which had no parallel in the preceding one: "Fidelity to the nation and loyalty to the State are fundamental political duties of all citizens." These words in themselves are not surprising; other constitutions employ them. It is every reference to the state in the lines and between the lines that enhances the position and prestige of Eire. No one official is imbued with the power attributed to the state as a whole, although the president and the Oireachtas are made responsible for it. However, it is not only the specific provisions of the *Bunreacht* that the state shall or may do thus and so, but it is the underlying presumption that the State of Eire comes first and the individual citizen second.

The crux of government has always been the right of the individual versus the right of the group. The State of Eire is the cham-

pion of the rights of the whole. In defining such a state, de Valera has drawn upon his scholarly training, his political experience, and upon the age-old religion of Ireland. In recognizing the family for instance as the fundamental unit of society, superior to all positive law, he is adhering to the social teachings of the papal encyclicals. In defining and defending "the common good" which Eire is to foster and protect, de Valera is giving voice to religious philosophy. Initial belief in the fallibility of mankind leads to reliance upon a superior force, a force more important than any personal rights. As the instrument of that superior force, the state plays a controlling role in regard to personal or "natural" rights. In fact, the new state allies itself so closely with this superior force—call it, perhaps, divine law—that it becomes synonymous with that force. Such an alliance cannot but enhance the position of the state.

It seems scarcely consistent to regard the new State of Eire described in the *Bunreacht* as springing solely from a social contract or agreement of the people. Like the family, it is endowed with a supernatural or pre-existing necessity and rightness. The state is the exalted means to an exalted end—the spiritual cultivation of its citizens. As in Aristotle's *Politics*, the state stands first. The question as to whether it shall be monarchical, oligarchical, or democratic comes afterward. Democracy was not regarded as an end in itself, the entire *raison d'être* of statehood, until very recently, and already that idea is waning. So in the *Bunreacht*, it is declared that the state *is;* that the administration of the state *shall be*. . . . Democracy has identified the will of the people with the good of the people. Older theories of government set up the state as the translator of that will into that good. So it is in the *Bunreacht*, which reiterates as the state's goal "the common good."

It was stated in the original constitution of the Irish Free State that "All powers of government . . . are derived from the people of Ireland. . . ." The new *Bunreacht* qualifies this derivation of authority. It declares: "All powers of government . . . derive, under God, from the people. . . ." Popular sovereignty, while it is enunciated, is not all in all. It goes hand in hand with divine guidance. The powers of the state do not derive exclusively from the people. The phrase "under God," which has drawn praise from Roman Catholic and Protestant presses alike, is no empty formula.

It bespeaks a divine right of statehood for Eire, and may be a modification of the theory of the divine right of kings. Although no one individual or dynasty or office is any longer the automatic heir of divine right, statehood itself becomes the heir. It is in the naming of officials and offices of the state that popular sovereignty enters the picture. De Valera has set up in Ireland the truly providential state—a state allied with Providence to provide for its citizens.

In Ireland, after the recent revolution and achievement of independence, the suppressed Irish State came into its own after centuries. It was the English government, not government itself, which was deemed to be the aggressor upon the natural rights of Irishmen. The visionary Irish State, long remembered and anticipated in story and song, took on the aspect of the people's real champion. Hence it is natural, while the Irish government is still clothed in the raiment of the popular liberator, that it should continue to play its role of supreme defender of private rights. Consequently, no large sphere of these rights is made constitutionally inaccessible to the state.

Some of the responsibilities of such a providential state are outlined by de Valera in the section of the *Bunreacht* called *Directive Principles of Social Policy*, a phrase from the encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*. Economic order is the primary concern of these clauses which seek to promote the greatest good of the greatest number. This goal is to be attained according to the constitution not by allowing individual enterprise full sway, but by permitting official guidance. Control of essential commodities of credit, production and distribution of goods, use of the land are not to be concentrated in a few hands. The state is pledged to supplement private initiative and to safeguard the weaker sections of the population. While thus discarding the doctrine of laissez faire, the economic responsibilities of the state are expressly indicated. These *Directive Principles* give the state latitude, but they also give the people the right to expect much from the state. The "weaker sections of the community," "the infirm, the widow, the orphan, and the aged," may claim special care from the government. Workers may look to the state for protection of their strength and health. The government already has assumed responsibility in fields once largely untouched by officialdom: agriculture, industry, housing, for instance.

In return for the outright obligations assumed by the new state

for "the common good," Eire will exercise wide powers over the individual. This is a necessary *quid pro quo*. To act, there must be the power to act, but power breeds the abuse of power. Of all this the *Bunreacht* shows full consciousness. Its author has drawn nicely the line between governmental powers and governmental obligations. Yet the emphasis in the constitution is upon "the State" rather than upon "the people" or "the citizens." The state stands first as the supreme dispenser; it becomes the decisive factor in arbitrating between personal liberty and public interest. De Valera has attempted to solve the problem of liberty and authority by giving the state wide power but by simultaneously making the state's sole purpose "the common good."

The earlier Irish constitution, that of 1922, derived from English influence, and was drawn up specifically to fulfill the provisions of a treaty with England. It concerned itself with the practical side of government, its form and necessary powers. It did not formulate any theoretical basis, nor did it attempt any definition of an Irish state or an Irish nation. Not only in the parliamentary formula was the constitution of 1922 influenced by English government, but also in its general scope. John Stuart Mill stated that "M. Comte can point to little of the nature of metaphysica in English politics." The new constitution of Ireland by contrast rests upon a deeply fraught metaphysic.

Except in so far as the *Bunreacht* re-adopts the parliamentary system of government, it is not inspired by English influence. The species of *étatism* which it enunciates traces back to other roots. Ireland now for the first time has a constitution subtly suited to her own traditions and temper. The dangers inherent in the imposition of the English customs and laws upon a nation which had had its own Brehon Laws were suspected, though not avoided, as early as the sixteenth century by Edmund Spenser: "Therefore sithence wee cannot now apply lawes fit to the people, as in the first institutions of common-wealths it ought to bee, wee will apply the people, and fit them unto the lawes, as it most conveniently may bee."

It is de Valera's fundamental conception of a providential state which is, if anything, open to charges of authoritarianism. It is not personal ambition to be dictator on his part, nor are there specific constitutional provisions which make the charge of an Irish dictator-

ship tenable. But between the lines of ***Bunreacht na hEireann*** can be discerned a desire to fortify the powers of the state. Psychologically, de Valera's wish to reinforce the state's position is easy to understand. Upon coming to power, he found himself checked by the constitution of 1922 which England had approved, and the shadow of England still reaches across the Irish Sea. Thus it is that de Valera has sought to replace the old Free State with the new and more powerful State of Eire, a state which can exercise wide power over individuals in the interest of the whole Irish people.

There is in Ireland a certain innate affinity between the individual and destiny. The paradox of self-abnegation and egoism, often striking in an Irishman, is reconciled when the individual loses himself in "the Movement," for instance, or in the Church, and now in the State. He loses himself in these superior forces only to find himself again as a magnified and glorified being. Thus it was with the martyrs of 1916 who intentionally set out to die for Irish independence, and did so without qualm or quaver about personal sacrifice. These men had wholly identified themselves with Ireland. If it can be assumed that such an affiliation between individual and state will continue, conflict between the rights of the individual and of society will not occur. It is upon this premise that de Valera has written the new constitution. With Plato, he regards the life of the state as the end and purpose of individual existence.

THOREAU IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

CHARLES CHILD WALCUTT

THE WORKS of Henry David Thoreau continue to be read in spite of determined neglect and the repeated charge that he has nothing to offer the modern world. The more he eats away at the rocky complacency of our industrialized society, the more we are wont to accuse him of having dodged the real issues, of having fled from reality, of having tried to impose a highly specialized, lopsided way of life upon everyone, of having been, in short, irascible, intolerant, cantankerous, and antisocial. Evidences of this contest abound. Within a year there have been two new editions of his works, and a constructive criticism of our society, based upon his ideas, which has been warmly received by thoughtful people; on the other side we have an article, "Is Thoreau a Modern?" in the *North American Review* in which Donald Culross Peattie decides that he is primarily of value as a naturalist, that "the gap between his century and ours is one of the greatest in the history of the human structure, greater perhaps than the change from classic civilization to barbarian romanticism. It asks too much of him to bridge it." He adds that science has outstripped him, and that his way of life can be practiced only by bachelors—women and children being beyond its pale. And now Henry S. Canby's long-awaited biography appears, virtually ignoring the tremendous weight of Thoreau's social criticism and handling the bombshells of his most explosive ideas as if they were roses. I propose here to try to show what Thoreau really intended and to consider how his thought can be applied—and indeed is being applied—to the most pressing modern problems.

To begin with, there are certain widespread misapprehensions about Thoreau that must be considered. It has been the fashion to describe *Walden* as a book of beautiful nature writing curiously introduced by a hundred pages (which the initiated reader will skip over) of ill-advised and ill-tempered diatribe against society. Such an interpretation misses both the purpose of the book and the way its construction serves that purpose. Thoreau foresaw that he would be misunderstood. "You will pardon some obscurities," he wrote, "for

there are more secrets in my trade than in most men's, and yet not voluntarily kept, but inseparable from its very nature. I would gladly tell all that I know about it, and never paint 'No Admittance' on my gate."

He has been accused of wanting everyone to go live in the woods, as he did; but he has clearly stated the contrary: "I do not mean to prescribe rules to strong and valiant natures . . . but mainly to the mass of men who are discontented, and idly complaining of the hardness of their lot or of the times, when they might improve them. . . . I also have in my mind that seemingly wealthy, but most terribly impoverished class of all, who have accumulated dross, but know not how to use it." And from those who needed his guidance, the last thing Thoreau wanted was to be copied. "I would not have any one adopt *my* mode of living on any account; for, beside that before he has fairly learned it I may have found out another for myself, I desire that there may be as many different persons in the world as possible; but I would have each one be very careful to find out and pursue *his* own way." Surely nothing could be more emphatic or explicit. And yet one hears of a group of students in Massachusetts who read *Walden* and try to live, motion for motion, as near as they may, the way Thoreau did—measuring their success not by how well they are developing themselves, but by how closely they can copy him! Poor Henry would turn—nay, he would thrash about in his grave at this spectacle.

As for the purpose and organization of *Walden*—Thoreau begins by indicting modern life for having subordinated the good of the individual to unessential Things. Next he expounds his philosophy of individual enrichment and self-awareness. And finally, having given his solution abstractly, he proceeds to show one way that the goal he sets up may be achieved. This is the purpose of his nature writing. Nature provides a means to self-sufficiency and awareness because through contact with it one may be led to an intuitive perception of ultimate reality and consequently may become aware of the relative importances of all things, and of one's own place among them.

The opening chapters are aimed to show what is wrong with life as it is commonly endured. Thoreau meant to anger his readers here, but perhaps he overstepped his mark, for most readers become

so enraged that they throw the book down or skip a hundred pages—and miss his point entirely. The trouble, he says, is that men have no notion of why they are living, or to what end, and so they delude themselves with shams and become slaves to the material things which should exist only to serve them. "By closing the eyes and slumbering, and consenting to be deceived by shows, men establish and confirm their daily life of routine and habit everywhere, which still is built on purely illusory foundations." And the worst of it is that they do not know what is wrong. "The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation," and yet they have no inkling of where to begin improving them. They do not know how "to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life," because they do not know what these essential facts are. Thoreau begins with a diatribe against current values and practices in order to show what is not essential. To work his readers into a receptive frame of mind, he must convince them that "most of the luxuries, and many of the so-called comforts of life, are not only not indispensable, but positive hindrances to the elevation of mankind." They are hindrances because they prevent the recognition of a Unity, a higher nonmaterial reality which underlies the Things that are in the saddle, riding mankind. Stated in less transcendental language, this means that the integrity, freedom, and intellectual self-sufficiency of the individual is of primary importance. All values must point toward the individual. One must know himself before he can profit from knowing or owning things.

Evidences of the way we misuse our lives are all about us. We make slaves of ourselves to be fashionably dressed, whereas, says Thoreau, "A man who has at length found something to do will not need to get a new suit to do it in." In fact, he warns us to "beware of all enterprises that require new clothes, and not rather a new wearer of clothes." Does he mean this literally? Indeed he does. We all recognize, however obscurely, that our concern with clothes, based on a sordid desire to spend money ostentatiously, is a pretty inconsequential substitute for serious living. Nevertheless, we resent the imputation that we may be wasting our time—to say nothing of our immortal souls—and retaliate by calling Thoreau names. He is out of date. He is antisocial. He wants to make misanthropes of us all. Surely one does not have to abjure all social intercourse and

go live in the woods in order to recognize that some of our customary activities are fruitless.

With the same discernment he anticipated the evils of industrialization. "Where is this division of labour to end? and what object does it finally serve?" he asks. "I cannot believe that our factory system is the best mode by which men may get clothing. The condition of the operatives is becoming every day more like that of the English; and it cannot be wondered at, since, as far as I have heard or observed, the principal object is, not that mankind may be well and honestly clad, but, unquestionably, that the corporations may be enriched." Here is no scorn of science, as Mr. Peattie pretends, but merely a noble concern with the uses to which it is put. If inventions were employed to make men's lives richer and easier, Thoreau would welcome them, but when they bring about scarcity, inferior products, and unemployment, he may well insist that "Our inventions are wont to be pretty toys, which distract our attention from serious things. They are but improved means to an unimproved end." Nor can one justly accuse him of inconsistency when he enjoys the railroad that passes Walden Pond. Again it is a question of ends and means. The railroad is a symbol of diligence and punctuality—if only "the enterprise were as heroic and commanding as it is protracted and unwearied!"

If people did not recognize the truth of these assertions they would not have been deriding them so energetically for the last eighty years. Indeed, it is a nice question whether people have ever been so painfully aware of the meaninglessness of what they are doing—witness the desperate remedies of war and fascism.

This general indictment of society extends to every part of it. We are, as Thoreau says in one of his finest sentences, the tools of our possessions: "I know one or two families, at least, in this town, who, for nearly a generation, have been wishing to sell their houses in the outskirts and move into the village, but have not been able to accomplish it, and only death will set them free." Only death. "How many a poor immortal soul have I met well-nigh crushed and smothered under its load, creeping down the road of life, pushing before it a barn seventy-five feet by forty, its Augean stables never cleansed, and one hundred acres of land, tillage, mowing, pasture, and wood-lot! The portionless, who struggle with no such

unnecessary inherited encumbrances, find it labour enough to subdue and cultivate a few cubic feet of flesh." And yet we try to decorate these houses with baubles before they are paid for. We attempt to be refined before we have anything to build on. "Before we can adorn our houses with beautiful objects the walls must be stripped, and our lives must be stripped, and beautiful housekeeping and beautiful living be laid for a foundation."

It is the loss of individual integrity and self-sufficiency that renders modern people easy prey to demagogues and propagandists. We communicate too easily and too frequently and, having little or nothing to communicate, we find our activity becoming increasingly frenzied and meaningless. Thoreau deplored this cheapening of the individual. Here is a passage that tells volumes about our way of life: "Society is commonly too cheap. We meet at very short intervals, not having had time to acquire any new value for each other. We meet at meals three times a-day, and give each other a new taste of that old musty cheese that we are. We have had to agree on a certain set of rules, called etiquette and politeness, to make this frequent meeting tolerable and that we need not come to open war. . . . We live thick and are in each other's way, and stumble over one another, and I think that we thus lose some respect for one another. Certainly less frequency would suffice for all important and hearty communications. Consider the girls in a factory,—never alone, hardly in their dreams. It would be better if there were but one inhabitant to a square mile, as where I live. The value of a man is not in his skin, that we should touch him."

These are not the words of a man who disliked people, but of one who liked them so much that he wanted them to put their best selves forward. If he withdrew—temporarily, not, as his critics seem to imply, permanently—from society it was because he wanted to "front only the essential facts of life," to drive it "into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it." Publish it. There was always a social purpose in Thoreau's activity. If he was isolated, it was the fault of a society that was not worthy of him. As he says, "What sort of space is that which separates a man from his fellows

and makes him solitary? I have found that no exertion of the legs can bring two minds much nearer to one another."

So runs Thoreau's charge, and it is unanswerable. To say that he had no wife to provide for is mere evasion. His remedy applies to everyone. Simplify! simplify! "Shall we always study to obtain more of these things, and not sometimes to be content with less?" "Superfluous wealth can buy superfluities only. Money is not required to buy one necessary of the soul." Yes, but if one admits the principle and begins stripping the unessentials away from his life he soon finds himself doubting everything—and he withdraws in horror from the prospect of finding that no one of his cherished activities is essential. It is at this point that the beleaguered modern throws up his hands and says he will have no more of Thoreau; and so perhaps it is at this point that most of his readers want to be shown what things Thoreau will admit are good, why they are so, and how the modern can find satisfaction in them.

Individual self-sufficiency is at the heart of Thoreau's system of values. Instead of beginning with things in the hope of eventually accumulating enough of them to have a full life, he would have us begin with ourselves, work from within, and become concerned with externals only as we discover needs within ourselves to which those externals answer. "This spending of the best part of one's life earning money in order to enjoy a questionable liberty during the least valuable part of it, reminds me of the Englishman who went to India to make a fortune first, in order that he might return to England and live the life of a poet. He should have gone up garret at once." If we begin at the wrong end, we shall fritter our lives away with details and when we come to die find that we have not lived.

One should find his occasions within himself. "However mean your life is, meet it and live it; do not shun it and call it hard names. It is not so bad as you are." Providing for the future, living by memories or hopes—these are ways of shunning one's life and hence of never living it, never discovering its full value. Thoreau tells us to begin with ourselves and to begin NOW: "In any weather, at any hour of the day or night, I have been anxious to improve the nick of time, and notch it on my stick too; to stand on the meeting of two eternities, the past and future, which is precisely the present moment; to

toe that line." And again, "Men esteem truth remote, in the outskirts of the system, behind the farthest star, before Adam and after the last man. In eternity there is indeed something true and sublime. But all these times and places and occasions are now and here. God Himself culminates in the present moment, and will never be more divine in the lapse of all the ages. And we are enabled to apprehend at all what is sublime and noble only by the perpetual instilling and drenching of the reality that surrounds us."

These inspiring passages tell us that for the individual who has bored deeply enough within himself, anything may be made a means to the end of a full life. The individual spirit that knows its own worth is never in danger of being made a slave to anything it owns or does. Thoreau's activities—berrying, watching animals and the railroad, gossiping in the village ("in homeopathic doses"), even reading—these could be vices if they were the things of a mean spirit which they had conquered. The beauty they are endowed with in *Walden* comes from Thoreau, for they are the creatures of his superb individuality, and he draws richness and adventure from them without sacrificing a jot of his freedom. When he had gathered, in two years, what Walden could give him, he demonstrated his freedom of spirit by leaving. Yachts, mansions—anything can contribute to a good life if the owner of them is man enough really to own them, if, that is, they answer to a genuine and worthy need within himself. Let us abandon once and for all the notion that Thoreau absolutely condemns material possessions. He does, however, recognize that possessions usually do act as a bar to individual integrity. But this is only because, to repeat, men have not developed inwardly as fast as they have accumulated dross outwardly.

Two more points will suffice to bring out the organization and purpose of *Walden*. First, how does Thoreau prove these assertions that the individual is of first importance? The answer is his transcendentalism. He believes that there is a spiritual unity underlying the world of physical appearance. This Spirit is of a higher order than the physical world, and man derives his best, essential self from it. It is the ultimate reality beside which all temporal things are incidental. To perceive this Unity is for Thoreau the highest good. Communion with it is accomplished through meditation and contem-

plation—not, indeed, by going into a trance, but by stripping one's mind of petty, distracting thoughts and living so directly that one is always in contact with the reality behind the world's shifting appearances. It is a way of thinking that becomes a mode of life, accomplished by self-discipline and development, and it is its own reward. It is not, let it be emphasized, a dreamy absent-mindedness, but the keenest sort of awareness and alertness—a life in which every moment is rich with significance, instead of the ordinary life composed of long voids of boredom dotted with specks of excitement that are cherished and embroidered in memory to make the voids endurable. Spirit, in Thoreau's philosophy, is not the God of Christianity. It is not a personal god at all, for belief in a personal god, like a concern with things, he feels, robs the individual of self-sufficiency by drawing his attention away from instead of within himself. One gains awareness of this Unity by digging within himself here and now. These ideas are presented in the chapter "Where I Lived and What I Lived for," which follows the long attack on society and which ends with a stirring paragraph summing up his belief and giving a hint of the program he means to follow at Walden:

> Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in. I drink at it; but while I drink I see the sandy bottom and detect how shallow it is. Its thin current slides away, but eternity remains. I would drink deeper; fish in the sky, whose bottom is pebbly with stars. I cannot count one. I know not the first letter of the alphabet. I have always been regretting that I was not as wise as the day I was born. The intellect is a cleaver; it discerns and rifts its way into the secret of things. I do not wish to be any more busy with my hands than is necessary. My head is hands and feet. I feel all my best faculties concentrated in it. My instinct tells me that my head is an organ for burrowing, as some creatures use their snout and forepaws, and with it I would mine and burrow my way through these hills. I think that the richest vein is somewhere hereabouts; so by the divining rod and thin rising vapours I judge; and here I will begin to mine.

"Here I will begin to mine." The rest of the book is devoted to this mining. The next three chapters are entitled "Reading," "Sounds," and "Solitude." The order of these chapters is very significant. Having disposed of society's unessentials, he now proposes to dig for Reality—and each of these three kinds of experiences represents a further step toward it. Through reading—and "books must

be read as deliberately and reservedly as they were written"—one absorbs the best thoughts of the best thinkers of all times. This is better than gossip. But fine as it is, it is Truth at one remove from absolute reality, for it has been transformed into symbols. This is what Thoreau means by the cryptic passage opening the chapter on "Sounds": "But while we are confined to books . . . we are in danger of forgetting the language which all things and events speak without metaphor, which alone is copious and standard. . . . The rays which stream through the shutter will be no longer remembered when the shutter is wholly removed." Language is a metaphor: that is, the word *straight* conveys an idea indirectly which we can gain directly by seeing something that is straight. It is a symbol or metaphor. The shutter is anything—our language, our senses, our intellect—that breaks truth up into fragments or symbols of any sort. When we perceive the Unity (light) underlying the diversity (rays) of the physical world, we are seeing Truth directly instead of through a shutter that divides it into phenomena. A way to advance one step closer to Reality is to appreciate the language which things speak directly—of which sounds are an example. And Thoreau goes on to describe, in some of his finest passages, the rich experiences he gained from sounds. He admires the trainmen and relishes "the muffled tone of their engine bell from out the fog-bank of their chilled breath, which announces that the cars *are coming*, without long delay, notwithstanding the veto of a New England north-east snow-storm." But best of all are the sounds of nature. The screech owls, for example, "are the spirits, the low spirits and melancholy forebodings, of fallen souls that once in human shape nightly walked the earth and did the deeds of darkness, now expiating their sins with their wailing hymns or threnodies in the scenery of their transgressions. . . . *Oh-o-o-o-o that I never had been bor-r-r-r-n!* sighs one on this side of the pond, and circles with the restlessness of despair to some new perch on the grey oaks. Then—*That I never had been bor-r-r-r-n!* echoes another on the farther side with tremulous sincerity, and—*bor-r-r-r-n!* comes faintly from far in the Lincoln woods." And there is the unforgettable description of the bullfrogs on the following page.

Richer than sounds, nearer to Spirit, is Solitude, for it is through solitary contemplation that one sees into the heart of things. No

one, perhaps, has described this experience more vividly than Thoreau: "In the midst of a gentle rain, while these thoughts prevailed, I was suddenly sensible of such sweet and beneficent society in Nature, in the very pattering of the drops, and in every sound and sight around my house, an infinite and unaccountable friendliness all at once like an atmosphere sustaining me, as made the fancied advantages of human neighbourhood insignificant, and I have never thought of them since. Every little pine needle expanded and swelled with sympathy, and befriended me. I was so distinctly made aware of the presence of something kindred to me, even in scenes which we are accustomed to call wild and dreary, and also that the nearest of blood to me and humanist was not a person nor a villager, that I thought no place could ever be strange to me again." Such experiences, Thoreau would say, would come more and more frequently, and unsought, to people who had risen above some of the trivial delusions commonly esteemed important by society and had accustomed themselves to facing reality instead of fleeing from it.

The rest of *Walden* is devoted to variations on the themes already described—thoughts, people, nature; mostly the latter, but the discerning reader will see that all the nature description is included as documentation of the thesis that any man can live a rich and full life if he will but follow his genius. Living with nature is only one way, as Thoreau indicates again in his conclusion: "I learned this, at least, by my experiment: that if one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavours to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours. . . . In proportion as he simplifies his life, the laws of the universe will appear less complex, and solitude will not be solitude, nor poverty poverty, nor weakness weakness. If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them."

This discussion of Thoreau's leading ideas shows, I trust, that they have lost none of their validity with the passage of years. But people who admit their truth and their desirability still do not see how they can be made use of in the complicated modern industrial world. They have wives and children. Jobs are scarce. They must conform or starve. Perhaps it is not encouraging to remark that the very inaccessibility of Thoreau's proposals is the measure of our

need for them, but it is true. Most of the ills of contemporary society can be traced to apathy, conformity, and the absence of that self-sufficiency which Thoreau urges. If we were not so straitly fastened to Things, we could do something about them. How?

Thoreau not only wrote, he lived his principles. In *Walden* he enunciated the doctrine that "There are nowadays professors of philosophy, but not philosophers. Yet it is admirable to profess because it was once admirable to live. To be a philosopher is not merely to have subtle thoughts, nor even to found a school, but so to love wisdom as to live according to its dictates, a life of simplicity, independence, magnanimity, and trust. It is to solve some of the problems of life, not only theoretically, but practically." And this was no idle boast, for, as we have seen, he lived his principles so completely that he was a true lover of wisdom. Following this policy, he refused to pay his poll tax to a state that tolerated slavery. "How does it become a man to behave toward this American government to-day? I answer, that he cannot without disgrace be associated with it. I cannot for an instant recognize that political organization as *my* government which is the *slave's* government also." On a trip to the cobbler's in Concord he was seized and thrust into jail, where he stayed until someone else paid the tax for him. To explain his action he wrote "Civil Disobedience," a document which may, with the passage of time, have a profounder influence even than *Walden*. There he says that "It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for the law, so much as for the right. . . . Law never made men a whit more just; and, by means of their respect for it, even the well-disposed are daily made the agents of injustice." They are made the agents of injustice because they allow the law to take the place of their own moral judgments. Recognizing evil, they nevertheless acquiesce in it because, forsooth, it is legal. They recognize what is right, but they do not practice it. As Thoreau says, "There are nine hundred and ninety-nine patrons of virtue to one virtuous man." Merely voting against a patent evil, when you are in the minority, is being a patron of virtue; it is a painless way of salving your conscience. If the State is wrong, says Thoreau, why, refuse it your allegiance. But this is anarchy, you reply. Thoreau rejoins that the world is *wrong*—and who can deny it?—that a man who is right constitutes a majority of one. "A minority is powerless while it con-

forms to the majority; it is not even a minority then; but it is irresistible when it clogs by its whole weight. If the alternative is to keep all just men in prison, or give up war and slavery, the State will not hesitate which to choose. If a thousand men were not to pay their tax-bills this year, that would not be a violent and bloody measure, as it would be to pay them, and enable the State to commit violence and shed innocent blood. This is, in fact, the definition of a peaceable revolution, if any such is possible."

One cannot evade the truth of these sentences. "I know this well, that if one thousand, if one hundred, if ten men whom I could name,—if ten *honest* men only,—ay, if *one* HONEST man, in this State of Massachusetts, *ceasing to hold slaves*, were actually to withdraw from this copartnership, and be locked up in the county jail therefor, it would be the abolition of slavery in America. For it matters not how small the beginning may seem to be: what is once well done is done forever. But we love better to talk about it: that we say is our mission." Do we not still? In a modern totalitarian state the resistance of one individual would not accomplish a revolution; but the devout resistance of one thousand, followed by another devout thousand would soon accomplish it—even in Germany. And in America, where we still respect democracy and where the individual —though the current is flowing in the other direction with dangerous speed—is still considered important, ten respected, HONEST men in any city of thirty thousand could, by refusing to cooperate in supporting unjust laws, bring about their repeal.

Outrageous? It is not. Today we have the spectacle of Jersey City. Is democracy to be restored there by talking about it? By writing a lot of articles about it? We may safely say that the citizens of Jersey City have as good a government as they deserve, for if a few thousand of them—and surely there must be that many who deplore the present administration—were to sit down and refuse to pay their taxes or in any way lend their support to the government, it would be changed in a week. But they countenance the evil, and it grows apace. Thoreau wrote, "They think that, if they should resist, the remedy would be worse than the evil. But it is the fault of the government itself that the remedy *is* worse than the evil. *It* makes it worse." And, he says a bit later, "even suppose blood should flow. Is there not a sort of blood shed when the conscience is

wounded? Through this wound a man's real manhood and immortality flow out, and he bleeds to an everlasting death. I see this blood flowing now." The last sentence is ominous, for we all recognize that the size of that stream of blood has increased with the passage of every year since Thoreau wrote. But no real blood would have to flow in Jersey City if a thousand or so HONEST citizens refused to conform. Most readers will recognize the truth of this and will reply that people haven't the courage of their convictions. Exactly. That is the apathy that Thoreau deplores. That is why, on the whole, we deserve no better than what we have.

The only qualification that must be made in this program is that the resistance of our honest men must be *passive*, for violence begets violence—and the violent man is, in the long run, not much better than the man he opposes. It requires courage of a sort to enlist and fight in a war to make the world safe for democracy. It requires a bit more courage to refuse when everyone is doing it—hence the fact that many pacifists join militant pacifist organizations: they need the moral support of numbers; they need, further, the comfort of activity—and so they become violently pacifistic and arouse violent opposition (which is certainly justified by their own violence) and so defeat their ends. They have contributed to the world's violence instead of counteracting it—and nothing has been gained. It requires most courage to resist quietly and passively, to refuse to contribute to current violence. This last sort of pacificism could stop any war in a short while, but it demands, unfortunately, a better sort of people than the world appears to contain.

These remarks take us to a book which is perhaps the most notable example of Thoreau's influence today. Aldous Huxley is a shrewd and earnest student of society. Scarcely given to puerile enthusiasms, he ranked at one time as the master cynic of our day. But unlike most cynics he has never stopped thinking—and recently he has published a book full of positive, constructive ideas about how to transform existing society into the society of men's ideals. This book, *Ends and Means*, can be fairly described as an elaborate application of Thoreau's ideas to modern society. Huxley would be pleased to have it so described, although it is not derivative so much as complementary: reading either book greatly enhances one's appreciation of the other.

The ideas just presented from "Civil Disobedience" are taken over bodily by Huxley. His major thesis is that the means employed to bring about any end determine the nature of the end. Violent means produce violent ends. So he urges passive resistance to war, on the theory that no advantage gained by force ever did more than create tension resulting in new acts of violence. War, further, comes because people want it: "Wherever we turn we find that the real obstacles to peace are human will and feeling, human convictions, prejudices, opinions. If we want to get rid of war we must get rid first of all its phychological causes. Only when this has been done will the rulers of the nations even desire to get rid of the economic and political causes." People lead empty lives, their work is dull, they have no satisfying goal to strive for. Hence they welcome the sharpened focus of a state of war, where everyone is united in uncritical pursuit of a common end. War, in short, is just one manifestation of the concern with unessential externals that characterizes people with no inner resources. As Thoreau said, "Only the defeated and deserters go to the wars, cowards that run away and enlist."

Huxley shows at length how modern life can be made to have meaning if industry is decentralized, work varied, responsibility concentrated in smaller and smaller groups. This is not to eschew the benefits of industry, but to make it serve men. Huxley wisely perceives that men spend as much time working as they do consuming. Their lives will be enriched more by interesting work than by meaningless diversions and possessions. Thoreau relished whatever he did. Of building his house he said, "I made no haste in my work, but rather made the most of it." And again, more generally: "I had this advantage, at least, in my mode of life, over those who were obliged to look abroad for amusement, to society and the theatre, that my life itself was become my amusement and never ceased to be novel." Such an outlook is what Huxley recommends for the modern world, to replace the desperate ennui that leads people to welcome violence. He looks toward a society of nonattached individuals—intelligent, generous, disinterested, aware.

Another manifestation of the spiritual emptiness that leads to war is the common misconception of religion. Belief in a personal god, says Huxley, leads to intolerance and subsequently to the justification of any violence on the grounds that it is the will of God.

Believers in a personal god endow him with their own hatreds and passions. Thus religion leads to war. At the other extreme there is the idea of a mechanistic universe which too many people erroneously suppose is based on the latest discoveries of science. The mechanistic universe is utterly purposeless, "a great machine pointlessly grinding its way towards ultimate stagnation and death." People with this belief become indifferent. Life has no purpose or significance for them, and they move apathetically through a void of trivial activities—gossip, movies, drinking, spectator sports. After the temporary excitement of the War their apathy returned redoubled. Now Fascism or Nazi-ism comes to them as a means of giving significance to at least a portion of the cosmos, and they rush into these new materialistic religions with the fervor of saints. "But," says Huxley, "nationalism and communism are partial and exclusive idolatries that inculcate hatred, pride, hardness, and impose that intolerant dogmatism that cramps intelligence and narrows the field of interest and sympathetic awareness."

Both of these religious maladies can be cured by the inculcation of a truer conception of the universe. This truer cosmology is the belief in an ultimate, nonmaterial, impersonal principle which underlies and gives unity to the world of appearance. Perception of this unifying principle and the intuitive identification of oneself with it is the highest good. It is achieved by contemplation and meditation, which are means for disciplining the will and freeing the mind from physical distractions. Its result is a life full of meaning, activity, and enjoyment. The evidence for it? It is of three sorts. First, the pragmatic fact that it *works:* it has been the belief of the best people of all times. Second, the evidence of these best people. Intuitive perception of a higher reality transcending the world of sense has been attained by Chinese, Hindu, and Buddhist mystics. It is attested by the few most enlightened Christian mystics who were able to see through the orthodox anthropomorphism to a higher reality free from passion and perceived without passion. It is attested by the greatest Americans, such as Emerson, Thoreau, and Whitman, who have described it many times. And finally, two sorts of tentatively scientific evidence support it. Mathematicians and astronomers like Eddington and Jeans have, as a result of their researches, become philosophical idealists. The latter conceives that "the universe can

be best pictured, although still very imperfectly and inadequately, as consisting of pure thought, the thought of what, for want of a wider word, we must describe as a mathematical thinker." The other scientific evidence is the experiments in extra sensory perception inaugurated by Professor Rhine at Duke and apparently verified at several other American universities. He claims to have proved the existence of a mode of perception which is quite independent of the senses and which operates without reference to time and space—the latter fact establishing, it would seem, the existence of an order of reality which is outside of the usual categories of time and space. These two points are not offered as final proof of idealism, but merely to show that the latest scientific thought is not as materialistic as that of fifty years ago.

Thus Mr. Huxley, whose affiliations with Thoreau are apparent on every page of *Ends and Means*. Thoreau did not press the social implications of his beliefs, because it was still possible for the individual to attain a measure of freedom and self-sufficiency more or less apart from society. But he certainly wrote for society, and he knew that the evils in store for America could be corrected only by increasing the awareness and self-sufficiency of the individual. His message was never more needed than it is today. If he did not bring out more emphatically the connection between his indictment of society and his transcendental way of life it was, no doubt, because he knew such explanation to be fruitless for the ordinary man and quite unnecessary for those with discernment to understand him.

Those who say that Thoreau is not modern mean that his message is of no value today. The reasoning underlying this conclusion needs only to be made clear in order to be refuted. It runs like this: what is modern is good; Thoreau is not modern—therefore his words have no value today. Confronted with this amazing syllogism, Thoreau might say "Look about you!" Who can say that the modern world has brought us nearer the fulfillment of man's highest potentialities than the world of 1850 did? Of course Thoreau is not modern. That is why he has so much to say to the modern world. And those who identify modernity with goodness are indeed most in need of his guidance.

Many readers, having conquered their initial resentment to Thoreau's ridiculing of their modern values, or, it might be more accurate to say, having been forced to admit that his strictures are

just, rationalize by dismissing him as impractical. "All very desirable," they say, "but quite impossible to make any use of today." This is just another way of identifying modernity and goodness. It is turning one's back on the good merely because one has not attained it. Ideals have always been to some degree unattainable, because they are formulated to balance an existing evil. It requires the existence of injustice to produce the ideal of justice. If injustices were to disappear, the concept of justice as a desirable ideal would also disappear. Seen in this light, the inaccessibility of Thoreau's ideal is the measure of our need for it, and the question "Is he modern?" becomes gratuitous.

"In the long run men hit only what they aim at. Therefore, though they should fail immediately, they had better aim at something high." And his closing words in *Walden:* "Only that day dawns to which we are awake. There is more day to dawn. The sun is but a morning star."

CHINESE HISTORIES AND THE FIRST DYNASTIC HISTORY

HOMER H. DUBS

IT IS REALLY no exaggeration to say that the Chinese possess the greatest set of historical records of any people, ancient or modern. In sheer quantity, Chinese history surpasses the rest of the world; in quality, it has also been unequaled, except by Occidental productions of recent times. There never have been any dark ages in China, and the Chinese government began collecting ancient books about 150 B.C. Hence, until the nineteenth century, there were more books in China than in all the rest of the world put together. Next to the Classics, which were the foundation of educated religion, the Chinese have esteemed history highest, so that histories have been written and preserved in China the like of which the world has not seen elsewhere until very recent times. The foregoing statements are merely facts, admitted by those who know Chinese and Occidental literatures.

Chinese history, like that of Europe, began with chronicles, some of which were brief and very dry, and others romantic and unreliable. Towards the end of the second century B.C., the father of Chinese standard history, Szu-ma Ch'ien, conceived of history writing in a thoroughly modern fashion as an account of various sides of human life, religious, legal, astronomical, and economic, as well as political. He wrote the first universal history. Pan Ku, in the first century A.D., wrote a continuation of this history. In so doing, he invented the Chinese dynastic history, which attempts to give an account of all the important changing sides of life, and includes both China and surrounding countries. The mass of material he collected compelled him to restrict himself to the period of one dynasty. Ever since that time his example has been followed from dynasty to dynasty, so that it has become the custom for each new dynasty, as soon as it was firmly seated upon the imperial throne, to appoint a board which should compile a history of the preceding dynasty. These dynastic histories have all been modeled on the first dynastic history, that written by Pan Ku, which is called the *History of the Former Han*

Dynasty. A dynasty would often attempt to outdo its predecessors, so that these dynastic histories have become quite voluminous. The Ming *History*, begun in 1679, for example, required a period of forty-six years of labor and a corps of fifty-three scholars. In 1912, the Chinese Republic similarly appointed a commission of sixty scholars to prepare the official history of the fallen Manchu dynasty; they worked fourteen years until the book was hurriedly published in 1927-1928. It contains 536 chapters in 131 volumes. This book, however, proved not to meet the standard set by preceding histories, so it was denied official recognition, and has been entitled merely a *Draft History*. For a decade it was proscribed, until the lack of anything better compelled its use. There are today twenty-five officially recognized standard histories, which include the one written by Szu-ma Ch'ien and the twenty-four dynastic histories that carry on his account. Each one is a substantial work, numbering at least a hundred chapters; the large ones number many hundreds of chapters and contain millions of words. A standard set of the "Twenty-five Dynastic Histories" as this set is called, fills more than two divisions in a library's stacks, and is many times the length of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. This set constitutes a body of detailed information concerning a single group of people unequaled in its continuousness, its general accuracy, and the wealth of information contained therein.

The very bulk of detailed material in these histories has been perhaps the greatest drawback to their use. Chinese style is extremely compact, so that it compresses an account into one-third or less the number of words needed in English. These histories are difficult to read; the earlier ones, in particular, need much explanation in order to be fully comprehended; there have hence grown up around them a wealth of comment that is also hardly paralleled in European histories. The exact translation of one passage frequently requires the study of long passages elsewhere in the book. Edouard Chavannes, who was perhaps the finest Chinese scholar the Occident has ever produced, spent some thirty years on a translation of Szu-ma Ch'ien's history, and only completed half of it. I found it took three years of continuous work to translate fourteen chapters of Pan Ku's *History*, exclusive of the time required to prepare this material for publication. Another American scholar is working on the T'ang history,

but is not attempting a translation, rather a condensation and summary of several Chinese works. Outside of these three attempts and a few chapters translated here or there, this great collection of Chinese histories remains available only to those who read the difficult literary Chinese.

In addition to these standard dynastic histories, the Chinese have many other histories. Some treat events merely chronologically, instead of topically, as do the dynastic histories. Some histories confine themselves to one incident, such as the relations of the Chinese with one barbarian tribe. There are also collections of state papers, collections of biographies, and treatments of various subjects, such as treatises on historical geography, accounts of economic policies, accounts of the government bureaucracy, etc. Perhaps the most interesting of these special histories are the local histories. China possesses what are undoubtedly the finest and most complete sets of local records in the world. Each province has its large gazetteer, giving an account of its history, antiquities, etc., and the biographies of eminent native sons of all periods; almost every large city and many smaller cities have similar gazetteers. Many of them have been revised at frequent intervals to keep them up to date. The active compilation of first-class histories began in China in the second century B.C. and has continued ever since; hence there has naturally grown up a vast amount of historical material. Nowhere else has history been cultivated so continuously or so assiduously.

The contents of these Chinese histories can best be recounted by giving an account of the first dynastic history, that by Pan Ku, for the others are almost all amplifications or developments of what was done in this book. The economic histories are amplifications and continuations of Pan Ku's chapter on economics, the chronicles are modeled on his "Annals," the historical geographies are developments from his "Treatise on Geography," etc. While he took many of his ideas from his predecessors, yet no single work has influenced Chinese history as this first dynastic history has. It is hence well worth describing in detail.

This *History* treats the period of the former Han dynasty, which lasted for two hundred and thirty years, from 206 B.C. to A.D. 23. In its compass of a hundred chapters (usually bound in thirty-two volumes), some eight hundred thousand Chinese words, it attempts to

give a complete picture of its time. Hence it does not confine itself to political history, as did Thucydides. In this respect it is quite modern in its outlook. Some modern Occidental historians have believed that an interest in more than political history, in an all-round account of a society, was a modern discovery. The Chinese have been doing that ever since 100 B.C. Shotwell, in his *Introduction to the History of Histories* (p. 31), writes that scholarly activity could not achieve much with nothing better than wooden tablets as a writing material. Yet the ancient Chinese histories were probably first written upon wood, which was the ordinary writing material of the time, and were transferred to plain silk when published. There was no papyrus in China, and paper was not invented until the second century A.D.; yet literary activity, indeed the production of works containing many hundreds of thousands of words, was not uncommon before that time. The dynastic histories are examples of what was achieved.

The *History of the Former Han Dynasty* falls into four great divisions, which have ever since been the four great divisions of the Chinese standard histories: annals, tables, treatises, and memoirs. In the first division there is an "Imperial Annals" for each reign. These chapters recount the important events of each reign in chronological order, giving exact dates for each event, so far as possible. The introductions to these chronicles summarize events in the emperor's life before he came to the throne; the body of the text includes his best edicts. In addition there are notices of portentous events: eclipses, earthquakes, droughts, deaths of kings and of the highest officials, their dismissals, etc. Important events detailed elsewhere in the *History* are mentioned in their proper chronological place here, with references to their fuller treatment.

These "Annals" are accordingly dry, uninteresting chronicles. An important rebellion may be summarized in two paragraphs. To the informed person, however, who had read the rest of the history, these chapters summarize the events of the reign and set them in their chronological order. In bulk the "Annals" amount to only one tenth of the whole history; their adequate comprehension requires a reading of the rest of the book. They are thus rather what we would call an expanded chronological summary than a history.

The second division of the *History* is a set of "Tables." There are tables of the various noble houses, giving the location and size of these noble estates, dates of establishment, citations of valorous deeds or imperial relationship for which the noble title was given, dates of accession and death of each noble, wherever ascertainable, etc. These chapters thus constitute a genealogical table of the nobles in the realm. Next there is an account of the official bureaucracy with its development, the establishment and abolition of offices, something about the duties and emoluments of each office, followed by a table detailing the occupants of the thirty-odd most important offices year by year through the period. Some office at the imperial capital must have kept a list of officials from year to year, which formed the basis of this interesting table. By its examination it is possible to determine the order of promotion among important ministerial offices, and see how emperors tried out promising persons in minor positions before trusting great responsibilities to them. These "Tables" form a useful complement to the chronological summary in the "Annals."

The third division of the *History* is the "Treatises," which are monographs, each recounting the history of some phase of life not treated in the political history. It is the possession of these treatises that constitutes the most marked difference between Chinese and European histories. In the Han *History*, there are ten treatises; succeeding histories have increased their number, chiefly by dividing the subject matter of one Han "Treatise" into two or more, and by transferring matters treated elsewhere in the Han *History* to a treatise. The *History of the Former Han Dynasty* has remained the model for all succeeding ages of historians.

The first of these treatises deals with matters of measurement, especially with the calendar and chronology. It begins with an account of the musical tubes, which is similar to and perhaps derived from the Pythagoreans. From one of these tubes there are derived the standard units of length, volume, and weight. There follows an account of the improvements in calculating the complicated Chinese calendar, including an elaborate astronomical and calendrical theory, stating the length of various astronomical and planetary periods, and directions for astronomical calculations. The "Treatise" concludes by

applying this astronomical theory to ancient history and deriving ancient dates that had not been previously determined. It matters little that the length taken for the lunar cycle was slightly incorrect, so that ancient dates a millennium earlier are in error by something like a century—the chapter remains an attempt to apply the best science of the age to historical problems.

The second treatise is devoted to rites and music. It gives an account of the court ceremonial and its development. There is a transcription of the hymns sung and danced at the most important imperial sacrifices, with an account of their composition. The number and duties of the court musicians and dancers are also described.

The third treatise is concerned with legal developments. It begins with an account of ancient territorial divisions and the amount of taxes and contributions required from them. There is a discussion of the use of arms, with the characteristic Confucian conclusion that the best armies were those led by princes so righteous that they needed employ no force, but commanded obedience through their virtue. Next, there is an account of the punishments employed, beginning with the ancient system of mutilations and recounting how the Han rulers substituted more humane methods. The more important changes in laws are discussed in chronological order. Here we have a conspectus of legal developments.

The fourth treatise is remarkable in that it concerns itself with economic developments. The first part might almost be entitled an account of the fiscal wrongs committed by the government against its people. It begins with a thoroughly modern calculation of the amount of grain an average farm can produce, the amount needed to support the family, the amount needed as reserve against the periodic famines and droughts, then it calculates the cash income from the remainder, deducts the amount needed for purchases of clothes, etc., and compares the balance with the amount of taxes, showing that the tax burden was far too heavy. This introduction is followed by an account of the government's experiments in taxation, farm aid, famine relief, etc. Memorials suggesting important economic changes are quoted in full. There follows an account of the coinage and the government's experiments in depreciating the coinage, preventing counterfeiting, raising extra revenue by selling noble ranks, establishing government monopolies in the most profit-

able businesses, taxing merchants, etc. The whole picture is of a government willing to experiment with almost any means of making money, even resorting to speculation in goods and money-lending; all the while the common people are seen to suffer anew with each government experiment. At the end of this period, a combination of disastrous economic experiments, corrupt government, pitiless and wholesale punishments, and continued famines reduced the population by half and produced the revolt that overturned the government and ended the dynasty.

The fifth treatise deals with the imperial cult. It enumerates the deities given government recognition, and tells of the new sacrifices introduced during the period. It also recounts the experiments of the emperors with mediums and magicians. All these events are recounted quite objectively, with no hint of the historian's feelings, until in his last sentence he intimates that righteous conduct is more effective than sacrifices or meddling with spirits. Such entire objectivity is attempted throughout Chinese history.

The sixth treatise is an account of the heavens: the constellations and their stars, the planets and their astrological meanings. As in Europe, astrology was then a science in good repute, so that it deserved special treatment in a picture of the age.

The seventh treatise, which is the longest chapter in the *History*, treats of portentous happenings. It was then the universal belief that Heaven manifests its will and reproof for government misdeeds by sending some portent as a warning; hence it was considered important for every ruler to understand their meaning. Portents are accordingly classified by their meanings and recounted with the interpretations given them by the best authorities. This chapter contains few if any impossible events; the bulk of the portents are conflagrations, earthquakes, droughts, locusts, prolonged rains, floods, solar eclipses, comets, meteors, etc. Thucydides also mentioned some portents in the much briefer period he treats; but I do not think that this *History* is really any less naturalistic than that of Thucydides. We know that Pan Ku considered portents as "dark, profound, obscure, and impenetrable"; he quotes contradictory interpretations for some. While he did not escape the universal belief in portents, he put little trust in them. In giving an all-round account of human life, portents required discussion, so he

compiled this account from earlier treatments; their presentation does not mean that he approved of them.

The eighth treatise deals with geography. After an introduction explaining the general character of the imperial territorial arrangements, there follows a list of all the administrative divisions in the empire, with all the cities in each division, together with the population of each division, of a few important cities, and incidental remarks about important places. How much would we give for a similar account of the Roman Empire! This treatise is a mine of information for historical geography. At the end there is a statement that this information is taken from the tax registers of 2 A.D. It is followed by an account of the characteristics found in each section of the country. Pan Ku recognized the importance of geography in history and hence included it in his account of the age.

The ninth treatise concerns itself with irrigation and flood control, recounting the government activities in digging irrigation canals and diking the ever dangerous Yellow River. Such matters had always been an important government concern.

The tenth treatise is perhaps the most remarkable of all, for it is a classified list of practically all the literature existing at the time, with notes on its authorship and summary statements concerning the various schools of thought represented. What would we not give for a similar list of books in the Alexandrine Library!

These ten treatises are not only important for themselves; they are even more important in that they inaugurated the practice that each dynasty should likewise take stock of itself, not merely in political matters, but also in matters calendrical, ritual, legal, economic, portentous, astronomical, geographical, and literary. The result has been that in China history has been conceived of as a record of changes in culture, rather than as merely a set of political changes. The subject matter of each treatise has furthermore been taken as the field of a whole history, so that we find histories of economic developments, of legal changes, etc., in thousands of pages. There is a historical geography in four hundred volumes. Successive dynasties have published the list of books in their imperial libraries, so that it is possible to trace a book from dynasty to dynasty, discover when it was lost, and detect forgeries. The trouble with

Chinese history is not the poverty of sources, but rather the extreme wealth of the material available.

The foregoing three divisions of the *History* constitute only the smaller half of the book; the fourth division, which consists of the biographies of some three hundred and forty important persons who lived during the period, is longer than the rest of the book. Some four thousand additional persons are also mentioned. The Chinese conceive of history in a common sense way as a record of the activities of individuals; consequently, this set of biographies is considered just as much a part of a history as a treatise on geography or the account of a campaign. Indeed, if the activities of individuals do not make history, it is difficult to know what does. According to this Chinese conception, the *Dictionary of American Biography* would be an essential part of a complete American history just as much as what is now found in our histories.

Much of what we should call the history of the time is to be found in these biographies. The biographies of generals contain detailed accounts of their campaigns. Those of statesmen quote their important memorials suggesting governmental measures; those of poets and literary men contain some of their poems and writings. Towards the end there is a memoir dealing with the eminent Confucian teachers, another on good administrators, and still another on harsh administrators. One memoir recounts the wealthy merchants, another the wandering redressors of wrongs, another those who attained high position through sycophancy. Three memoirs treat of foreign countries, so far as they were known. Then three memoirs recount the empresses and favorite imperial concubines, with their relatives and intrigues. The last chapter is the author's own introduction and table of contents. Pan Ku furnishes us with an account of his ancestry and his own philosophical opinions, and tells how he came to write this work.

In this history we have an unusually complete account of an ancient civilization at the height of its development. China was then in an important formative period, when the feudal system had recently broken down and an imperial government was being given permanent form. Many of the practices and much of the philosophy that have since dominated China were established in that period.

If we had an equally voluminous history of Rome, written only shortly after the period it recounts, dealing with the two centuries from Julius Caesar to Commodus, discussing every important person and circumstance in the empire and also telling of surrounding countries, would it not be one of the great historical treasures of the world? That is exactly the sort of thing the Chinese have in the *History of the Former Han Dynasty*. And if each few centuries thereafter a similar voluminous account should have been compiled, continuing this account, would not the ensemble be worth prizing beyond almost any other writings? That is precisely what the Chinese have in their "Twenty-five Dynastic Histories." No wonder they have considered themselves a cultured race!

ROMANTIC NATIONALISM IN GERMANY: THE CASE OF WEBER

RICHARD POATE STEBBINS

THE DEVASTATION wrought by nationalism in the modern world is the blackest cloud in the contemporary firmament and the most pregnant with promises of future evil. Of all our problems it is the one which most defiantly resists a rational solution, for reason has no part in it. Its seat is the emotions and its substance the darkly elemental fears and hates which have never ceased to burden the bosom of mankind.

Objectively considered, nationalism is a psychological phenomenon which translates itself into political and, eventually, military action. It is not from a recognition of its consequences, however, that it derives its hold over the mass mind. The human soul can seldom look reality in the face—it invents a thousand fictions and expedients to shield it from the gaze of the intolerable Truth. The strength of nationalism, and its danger, lies in its association with every part of man's experience, with all that humanity holds lovely and desirable. Nothing is safe from its corrupting influence. Love, courage, and renunciation are its handmaidens. It permeates every outgrowth of the human spirit, religion, philosophy, science, and the arts, and travesties them all.

Some may find hope or consolation in reflecting that nationalism as we know it is of comparatively recent growth. In the dynastic-agricultural world of the Old Regime it would have been out of place. If we could assign a date for its beginning it would be that of the French Revolution (and the American Congress) and 1939 would have been its sesquicentennial. Even less ancient is it in Germany, where its uncompromising application momentarily appears the greatest danger to an ordered world. There it dates, as a politically effective force, from the Napoleonic wars, the overthrow of French imperialism in Europe, and the expulsion of an hereditary invader from German soil.

Between the Prussian defeat at Jena in 1806 and the Napoleonic catastrophe of Leipzig in 1813, the German spirit underwent a trans-

formation the effects of which are still unfolding. For the petty absolutism of unnumbered secular and ecclesiastical potentates there was substituted the vision of a Germany strong, united, and free—free of particularist tyranny at home and invasion and interference from abroad. 'Many men helped to create the vision which overthrew Napoleon—gymnasts, poets, and musicians as well as soldiers and statesmen. For years Herder had been expounding the virtues of the *Volk*—of the unconscious spirit of every people revealing itself in arts and institutions. Now in 1807 came Fichte preaching the innate essential superiority of the German. Theodor Körner in *Lyre and Sword* sang the glory of war and liberation, and fell on the battlefield at twenty-two. Carl Maria von Weber set his verses to music.

The instructive case of Weber not only illustrates the effects of nascent nationalism on one who, finding it meaningless, became one of its most celebrated proponents; it illuminates the misconstruction to which everything in life is subject when nationalism comes to fruition. For nearly a century the composer of *Der Freischütz* has been marked by the proud words that Richard Wagner pronounced over his tomb: "Ne'er did a German-er musician live than thou. . . . The Briton may do thee justice, the Frenchman admire thee, but only the German can love thee; thou art his, a fair day of his life, a warm drop of his blood, a piece of his heart."

These most Wagnerian of words rounded out a well-merited oratorical triumph for the young Dresden conductor of 1844. Our quarrel is less with them than with the piety of German writers who endlessly repeat them without reflection or the vestige of a challenge. It is time to realize that Wagner's sounding phrases do not begin to dispose of his illustrious predecessor. They have merely postponed by one hundred years a balanced estimate of Weber's genius.

In the cult of Weber under the Third Reich the Wagnerian interpretation has been intensified, but there has been no need to modify its point and direction. So much of Germany's musical heritage has been sacrificed to an implacable philosophy that the survivors, among them Weber, receive a share of praise possibly exceeding their deserts and certainly of little credit to them. The crowning absurdity has (one must hope) been achieved by the President of

the Reich Theater Chamber, who declares that "Weber is the flesh-and-blood incarnation of the eternally German in what is perhaps its most agreeable form. We are of one stock with him, and our ancestors and his sprang from the same Dragon-Killers." If the blood of Dragon-Killers had any part in *Invitation to the Dance*, mythology stands in need of a revision!

Weber's actual heredity is of great importance in an age when everything goes down before the twin trumpets of Blood and Race, and it has occasioned difficulty to Nazi theorists struggling in the toils of their own complicated doctrine. For he was not, in the unimpeachable judgment of Hans Günther, *echt deutsch*. He was *dinarisch*—and though his skull resembled the skulls of Schiller, Nietzsche, Liszt, and even Dante, he was dark where they could boast of Nordic pigmentation. The possibility of an Asiatic constituent in the Dinaric group continues to challenge the ingenuity of anthropologists, but Richard Eichenauer takes pains to state in his semiofficial *Music and Race* that by Weber's time the spiritual character of the "Dinaric Race" had become fully assimilated to the general German soul.

There was another, remoter strain in Weber's heredity. His paternal great-grandfather was a certain Lorenz Chelar, a barber and perukemaker from Lower Brittany who followed the armies of Louis XIV across the Rhine and remained there under the name of Schlar. One or two German writers have attempted without notable success to deal with this complication, but the wiser ones ignore it.

The composer's father, Franz Anton von Weber, is one of the most interesting products of the eighteenth century. The "von" in his name was his own invention—social mobility was not altogether a consequence of the Revolution—and the aristocratic quality long noticed in the son's music did not therefore spring from the ancient lineage in which Carl Maria himself believed. Carl's mother, a frail appealing creature long slighted by posterity, has received—Heaven help her!—nine times her due under the Nazi Dispensation. She was a golden-haired child of the Franconian Alps who had gone hungry in Naples until the Emperor Joseph II discovered her, recognized a talent, and sent her to Vienna to study for the Imperial Opera. She did not make the grade, and at twenty-two may well have felt lucky to accept the hand of the aging but exuberant Franz Anton, father of eight children by a previous marriage. She married

him in 1785 and followed him to his little musical post in the extreme north of Germany. Carl Maria was born the following year.

During a recent visit to Vienna the author had occasion to verify certain of these facts at the church where they were married. As he left the building and crossed the square he noticed a poster headed "But for the Fertility of our Masters their Imperishable Compositions would never have been Created." Curious to discover the unsuspected relationship between musical and procreative capacity, he read further, only to see that the latter was enjoined not on genius itself but on its parents. The family trees of a number of composers stood as evidence of the results. The writer's heart was wrung to see the golden Genofeva, so lately married in the church across the way, depicted as the valiant German mother of *all* the children her redoubtable husband had been begetting for a quarter of a century!

In advertising an increased birth rate, she was doing no more than her posthumous duty by the Reichswehr battalions; but her position was terribly false because the facts, in her own case, directly contradicted the thesis she was there to uphold. Genius for her was not the result of laborious trial and error. It fell on her first child, the only one she was able to bring up in the intervals between illness and performance in her husband's traveling opera company. When Carl was twelve she died of consumption and was buried at Salzburg with her relatives, the Mozarts.

Carl Maria was born with a tendency toward lameness, which apparently connoted no predisposition to nationalistic sound and fury. The influence of his upbringing was in other directions. His mother gave him a smattering of Italian and, one suspects, much else. The musician's calling is almost of necessity a cosmopolitan one, and Weber was a traveler his life long, first with the parental opera company and then as an independent concert pianist. Circumstance alone restricted these journeyings to Greater Germany, until in 1826 he went to Paris and London, to conduct *Oberon*—and to die. Armies sometimes hindered him, but he accepted as natural the only order of things he could remember. His viewpoint was supranational, and "European" was the highest compliment he could bestow.

The determinative influence on Weber's attitude toward "nationality" was presumably that of his principal teacher, the Abbé Vogler, whom our age remembers only in Browning's poem. Some of Vogler's

contemporaries thought him a charlatan, with affected dress, portentous manners, and musical theories which no one could understand; others hailed him as greater than Beethoven. Weber's high opinion of him is not to be disregarded, though it may be doubted whether his association with the musical ecclesiastic has furthered his own repute. We are concerned, however, only with Vogler's relation to the dawning self-consciousness of nations.

For a man who strove to be original, the Abbé seems to have taken a line remarkably characteristic of his generation. It was an age that thought much about man in his "natural" state—a state Rousseau was content to extol but others sought to describe. Herder investigated the language and poetry of primitive races, emanations of the popular spirit or *Volksgeist* which for him was the essence of nationality, and urged that they be treasured as the most precious heritage of the maturing nations. What Herder did for popular poetry, Vogler was doing independently for national music. He made vast journeys—from Bamberg to Bologna, from Armenia to Greenland, recording the music of the races he encountered; and national color in music seems to have played a part in the mysterious teachings he imparted to Weber and to other disciples. Weber, like his master, was never happier than when composing on an authentic Chinese or Turkish theme; he adopted the Spanish manner to admiration in *Preciosa;* and *Oberon,* his last opera, is as oriental as he could make it.

Of course he also composed "German." Herder and his contemporaries had played no favorites among the nations—they were eighteenth-century cosmopolitan humanitarians. If the German nationality was good, so were the others. Providence had appointed that each should cultivate and perfect itself so that all might make their contributions to the higher purposes of humanity. How far Vogler followed upon this metaphysical ground we do not know; but the thoroughly practical Weber half-unconsciously shared the same attitude a generation later. Indeed, something he once wrote to a friend who had enjoyed Vogler's instruction sounds much like one of the latter's didacticisms: "Art has no Fatherland; and all that is beautiful ought to be prized by us, no matter what clime or region has produced it."

On what evidence, then, can Weber be classed with the nation-

alists? It is true that only one step divides the cosmopolitans, Herder and Vogler, from Fichte and the cultural isolationists. But that step Weber never took. The grounds for his adoption by the latter group—besides the obvious one that he was born a German and often composed like one—are three: his martial songs, his long struggle with the Italians, and his establishment of German opera.

The war songs, which are more celebrated than sung, date from a brief epoch and spring direct from his experience of Berlin, the center of the national regeneration. Naturally this impressionable young man who never expressed a political opinion was not immune to the emotions of marching troops and martial rhythms. He scored a popular poem for men's voices and wind instruments and taught it to the soldiers in their barracks while their captain stood by with streaming eyes. Many composers were setting young Körner's *Lyre and Sword* to music, and Weber welcomed the noisy poems for his experiments in male part-writing. The fact that crowds of students years after the Peace still serenaded him with his own settings does not prove him a greater patriot than his colleagues. He was merely a better musician.

Wearied with endless dronings of the Horst Wessel Song, the writer once asked a German student why Weber's famous patriotic choruses were never sung. The student, admitting he had never heard of them, replied, "At present we do not wish to encourage hatred against France." Truly a most reassuring answer (it was six weeks before the first dismemberment of Czechoslovakia)—but not the true one, which is that the German cultural dictators do not know them either. Trumpeting the virtues of an imaginary tribal past more falsely romantic than the farthest lapses of a Rousseau, they fail to recognize what is truly great in their national heritage, even when it might serve their purposes.

The emergence of the Berlin-Rome Axis has, perhaps, diminished the emphasis on Weber's opposition to Italian music and musicians, a late phase in a centuries-long struggle to free German cultural life from foreign domination. At the centers of musical taste, Vienna, Dresden, and Berlin, he found Italians as firmly implanted as Hitler on the Brenner, and it seemed to him inappropriate. How could Germany develop her own latent musical potentialities while Italian *impressari* with Court influence monopolized the scene?

When Italian opera was good he gladly praised it—he wrote admirable Italian arias himself. But he strongly and unremittingly reproved his countrymen for listening to inferior Italian operas when they might be sharpening their ears on something more bracing and worthy of their concentration.

All he asked was a fair hearing for German opera. Spontini at Berlin was an enemy only because he hindered the performance of *Der Freischütz* and *Euryanthe*. Weber recognized the Italian's genius. It was nothing to him that others resented Spontini as a Bonapartist, as a hanger-on of the reactionary Court. He was simply swept along—to triumph—at the head of a movement whose complex roots did not interest him.

Establishment of German opera as a going concern was a twofold task: to perfect a suitable art form and a competent group of performers. The extravagance of some later theories of German opera necessitates a quotation from Weber's manifesto addressed "to the music-loving public of Dresden" in 1817: "The musical forms of all other nations have hitherto been cast in a more definite mold than the German. By this I mean that the Italian and the Frenchman have created for themselves an operatic form in which they can comfortably move about at will. Not so the German. It is his peculiarity, in his curiosity and desire for continual improvement, to draw to himself the excellencies of all the others: but he takes hold of everything more deeply. Where with them the aim is mostly an irrelevant succession of sensuous delights, *he* wants a self-contained work of art, in which every part rounds out and unites in the perfect whole."

This is not a declaration of Teutonic superiority, though it is capable of political and anthropological deductions that Weber never dreamed of. It is a simple enunciation of the recognized principle that the same sauce may not suit both gander and goose—that your German has a right to his own operatic diet. If there is nationalism in it, it is only the wish to develop an art form suitable to the creative forces he saw fermenting all through Germany; and the content of this art form might be of many kinds. The romantic disciple of Vogler remained free to use the national music of other races and place his operas on foreign soil. Of them all, only *Der Freischütz*

is German in subject, and even that is laid in the Bohemian forest which has but lately "come home to the Reich."

Weber's requirement of a perfect ensemble of singers, orchestra and stage effects made unprecedented demands on available financial and technical resources. His innovations brought him into conflict with Italians jealous of privilege and princes solicitous of precedent. The crowned heads of Germany did not look with favor on this musician whose songs had stirred the breasts of youthful volunteers fighting, so they had thought, for freedom. Nationalism was not their creed. It was nationalism that had destroyed their Cousin Louis XVI on the Place de la Révolution. They had compromised with it to overthrow the Corsican, but now that God was back in his Heaven it should be discouraged as Jacobin sedition.

Weber (who was no Jacobin) died in 1826, before the national movement in Germany had so much as become respectable. He could have no conception of its ungenerous destiny. Whether he was indeed "most German of musicians" may be doubted; but the title sits more easily when one recalls his own reminder that Art knows nothing of frontiers or Fatherlands.

THE PARTICULARITIES OF DR. JOHNSON

FREDERIC M. HANES

> "It is in vain to try to find a meaning in every one of his particularities, which, I suppose, are mere habits contracted by chance; of which every man has some that are more or less remarkable."
>
> —Boswell, *Tour to the Hebrides*, October 12.

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON suffered throughout his long life from a curious nervous malady which produced not only the most bizarre movements of his body, keeping his entire frame in almost constant and irregular motion, but which deeply controlled his mind and was responsible for many of his mental peculiarities. The psychological study of Johnson is full of interest and very easy, for we know him better than any man who has ever lived. The unexampled genius of Boswell has portrayed his later years with a fullness of detail and a fearless candor of expression which veritably resurrects him for each succeeding generation. The "Flemish picture" which he drew of his great friend would have pleased a Gerhard Dou by its incomparable finish and richness of color. No other historical figure, I venture to say, could come among us and surprise us with fewer deviations from the mental picture we hold of him. His very eccentricities of body and mind, with which this brief article will concern itself, have aided in engraving his personality upon us: unfortunately these have formed almost the only impressions upon the minds of many. Johnson once humorously said to Mrs. Thrale, as they examined a picture of himself by Reynolds: "I shall not be known to posterity for my defects alone, let Sir Joshua do his worst," and the prophecy has been fulfilled; but his eccentricities have all too often thrown a deep shadow upon the many virtues of this truly great and good man.

What were these peculiarities of body and mind of which we have many testimonies? and what cause can be assigned for them? Johnson suffered, as I shall attempt to demonstrate from well-attested evidence, from a definite nervous disease, a neurosis, which neurologists call a tic—a French word, inadequate and somewhat ridiculous, but one that time has honored and medical nomenclature failed to supplant with a better. The conception of Johnson as a

lifelong sufferer from this nervous affection, and a comprehensive understanding of the malady itself will, I believe, shed a new light upon his character and enable us to view his eccentricities with a more tolerant and kindly eye.

The victim of a tic—and he is called a tiqueur—presents a great variety of symptoms both motor and mental. He is subject to irregular and bizarre spasms of the muscles, sometimes of one group, as the face, neck or arms, sometimes of many. These muscular spasms have the appearance of voluntary and rational acts, but their senseless repetition indicates that they are involuntary and irrational. A facial grimace, such as quickly and firmly closing the eyes, a spasmodic twitch of cheek, nose or lip, a toss of the head, a sudden, transient, yet ever recurring contortion of the neck, a spasmodic shrug of the shoulders—in fine the term *tic* embodies an infinite variety of bizarre actions that defy analysis, but which form the motor element of the disease. Their exhibition is a matter of everyday experience and is probably familiar to all.

Let us turn to the descriptions by several writers of what Boswell termed Johnson's "convulsive starts and odd gesticulations which tended to excite at once surprise and ridicule." Pope, though unacquainted with Johnson, described him in a note to Richardson, the painter, as having "an infirmity of the convulsive type, that attacks him sometimes, so as to make him a sad spectacle." And Fanny Burney, an excellent witness, wrote that "he has almost perpetual convulsive movements, either of his hands, lips, feet or knees, and sometimes of all together." Boswell thought the movements due to St. Vitus's dance (chorea), and attempts to strengthen his opinion by a quotation from the learned Dr. Sydenham; but Sir Joshua Reynolds, with more acuteness, recognized that "those motions or tricks of Dr. Johnson are improperly called convulsions, for [and this is a very important piece of medical evidence] he could sit motionless, when told to do so, as well as any other man." "My opinion," he adds, "is that it proceeded from a habit which he had indulged himself in, of accompanying his thoughts with certain untoward actions." Boswell is unconvinced. "I still think," he remarks upon this, "that these gestures were involuntary; for surely had that not been the case, he would have restrained them in the

public streets." But Sir Joshua was right; for one highly characteristic feature of the movements of those who have tic is that they can be inhibited, for a time at least, by volitional control. The execution of the movements, however, satisfies a curious need of the tiqueur, their rehearsal is soothing, and the volitional inhibition necessary for their control is weak and never of long duration.

Spectacular as are the varied motor manifestations of tic, they yet constitute a relatively unimportant feature of the disease. The bizarre contortions which move the tiqueurs acquaintances to pity, mirth, or ridicule cause little or no suffering to the victim of the malady; for the movements are largely subconscious and involuntary. The psychic life of the tiqueur, on the other hand, presents many curious deviations from the normal, and some of these are to the individual distressing in the extreme. One practically constant feature in the character of the tiqueur is a marked degree of *mental infantilism*, a retarded or arrested development of *volitional control*, mental and physical evolution being otherwise normal. Imperfection of mental equilibrium is normal in the child; he is vacillating and volatile, a creature of sudden desire and transient caprice; he turns lightly from one interest to another, and is incapable of sustained effort; he laughs or cries on slight provocation and his likes and dislikes are equally violent and unbounded. This mental instability of the child is usually atoned for by parental discipline and education; it is always accentuated by overindulgence and misdirected kindness. We speak of such instances of parental imbecility as "spoilt children" or "big babies," unjustly shifting the blame from parent to child. From the ranks of these unfortunate children is largely recruited the company of those who suffer from tic; for tics, generally speaking, are bad habits which become fixed and dominant in the absence of restraining influences. Negligence and weakness, too often vaunted as virtues by doting parents, allow the bad habits of childhood to degenerate into veritable infirmities which in the end master and dominate the individual. Such children mature into badly bred and capricious adults, incapable of inhibition, and ignorant of self-control. Volition is hopelessly stunted.

Have we any evidence that Samuel Johnson falls into the category of the children just described? I think we have a great deal.

Johnson was a sickly lad, suffering throughout his childhood from tuberculosis of the glands of the neck (scrofula), for which he was touched by Queen Anne, with the result usual in this variety of priestly therapeutics when divested of the all-important element of suggestion. That he was thoroughly spoiled by his father, old Michael Johnson, the bookseller, there can be no doubt, for Johnson's own robust testimony upon this point is faithfully recorded by Boswell. "My father," said Johnson, "was a foolish old man; that is to say, foolish in talking of his children," and we recall the picture of the three-year-old Johnson perched on his father's shoulders listening to the preaching of Sacheverel. "Mr. Hammond asked Mr. Johnson how he could possibly think of bringing such an infant to church, and in the midst of such a crowd." The doting father answers: "Because it was impossible to keep him at home," and seeks to excuse his own parental weakness by attributing an uncontrollable religious zeal to the child of three!

The pages of Boswell furnish us with a delightful anecdote, narrated in the true Boswellian style, which is conclusive evidence that Johnson was a spoiled and wilful child. "Nor can I omit," writes Boswell, "a little instance of that jealous independence of spirit, and impetuosity of temper, which never forsook him. The fact was acknowledged to me by himself, upon the authority of his mother. One day, when the servant who used to be sent to school to conduct him home, had not come in time, he set out by himself, though he was then so near-sighted, that he was obliged to stoop down on his hands and knees to take a view of the kennel before he ventured to step over it. His school-mistress, afraid that he might miss his way, or fall into the kennel, or be run over by a cart, followed him at some distance. He happened to turn about and perceive her. Feeling her careful attention as an insult to his manliness, he ran back to her in a rage, and beat her, as well as his strength would permit."

We may be assured, then, that the emotional instability and impetuosity of temper which characterized Johnson as a man, had their foundation in the habits of his childhood. "In short," writes Boswell, sustaining a favorite thesis of his great friend, "he is a memorable instance of what has been often observed, that the boy is the man in miniature; and that the distinguishing characteristics of each individual are the same through the whole course of his life." Johnson's

mother was a woman eminent for her common sense and clear judgments, but his father is described as "wrong-headed, positive and melancholy." These ancestral traits are all clearly discernible in the mature Johnson.

Johnson's attitude toward what Boswell terms his "particularities" is remarkable. He read Boswell's account of his eccentricities in the *Journal of the Tour to the Hebrides* and disappointed the expectant Boswell by taking no offense and making no comment. He was not morbidly sensitive to them, for when a certain "Miss Hunter, a niece of Christopher Smart, struck by his extraordinary motions, said to him, 'Pray, Dr. Johnson, why do you make such strange gestures'? 'From bad habits,' he replied. 'Do you, my dear, take care to guard against bad habits.'" Few recorded remarks of Johnson reveal more strikingly his keenness of penetration and abounding kindliness.

The tiqueur's mental instability and lack of self-control, due to retarded development of volition, find expression in various ways. Fixation of the attention is especially difficult and consecutive reading often impossible. Food is masticated with impatient haste and with scant attention to what are termed "table manners." There is an impatience evident in his actions, and contradiction and opposition are badly borne. The volitional inhibition, which is termed self-control, is usually lacking. Dr. Johnson's character reveals these defects of volitional control in a marked degree. He, the greatest scholar of his age, had never read a book through in his life—such was his morbid restlessness and impatience. When anyone mentioned a book in his presence his first question was, "Have you read it through?" and was always skeptical of an affirmative answer. "Everything about his character and manners," says Boswell, "was forcible and violent; there never was any moderation; many a day did he fast, many a year did he abstain from wine; but when he did eat it was voraciously; when he did drink wine it was copiously. He could practice abstinence but not temperance." Drinking with Johnson was a true dipsomania. It is recorded that he not infrequently drank fifteen cups of tea at a sitting. He gave up wine because the incessant repetition of the act of drinking—not infrequently one of the irresistible impulses of the tiqueur—demanded a fluid of lesser potency. Johnson was careless of what he drank; wine, lemon-

ade, or tea were equally capable of satisfying his dipsomania, or uncontrollable impulse to the act of drinking. The "oceans of tea" which he imbibed surely contributed to those sleepless nights and morning languors which he frequently laments and reprobates; but in an age when many worthy, Christian people went frequently to bed drunk, tea was regarded as almost innocuous.

His desire to triumph in every dialectic contest was morbidly developed, and often led him into painful exhibitions of lack of self-control. This trait of character was frequently childish in its manifestations. Witness the really terrible scene between Johnson and a Mr. Pepys at the home of Mrs. Thrale, so graphically described by Fanney Burney in her memoirs. From a seemingly trivial provocation, nothing more than an implied criticism of Johnson's appraisal of Lord Lyttleton's poetic genius, sprang a truly Vesuvian exhibition of Johnson in full eruption. Who has read the passage without sharing Johnson's own foreboding of mental abnormality? Instances might be multiplied but are unnecessary; every true Johnsonian has them by heart, for some of his finest sayings had their origin in these vehement outbursts.

The manifestations of tic which we have thus far considered might almost be termed objective, but there is a more somber phase of this curious nervous malady which is intensely subjective. The sufferer becomes the victim of obsessions and fixed ideas; of violent prejudices and equally violent predilections, together with phobias of the most diverse description. These are sometimes spoken of as "psychical tics" in contradistinction to the more purely physical or motor manifestations of the malady. All of these mark a flaw in volitional control. One tiqueur can sit only on a certain seat, sleep only in a certain bed; another can only enter a room by a particular door or upon a certain foot; still another is irresistibly compelled to go to his destination in the city by a particular street, and endless detours are accordingly made. An uncontrollable fear of wide spaces may lead to the avoidance of squares and parks; or, on the contrary, narrow streets and closed places are shunned. There may exist an irresistible impulse to count the windows in each house passed, or to touch with the hand or feet the posts along the street. Uncontrollable fears (phobias) of sickness or death, of fire, water, knives, and many other things frequently add to the suffering of the tiqueur.

Phobias such as these are usually associated with a tendency to hypochondria and melancholia.

In the light of what has just been said let us read again the pathetic picture which the puzzled Boswell draws of Johnson's mental peculiarities. "About this time he was afflicted with a very severe return of the hypochondriac disorder, which was ever lurking about him. He was so ill, as, not-with-standing his remarkable love of company, to be entirely adverse to society, the most fatal symptom of the malady. Dr. Adams told me, that as an old friend he was admitted to visit him, and that he found him in a deplorable state, sighing, groaning, talking to himself, and restlessly walking from room to room. He then used this emphatical expression of the misery which he felt: 'I would consent to have a limb amputated to recover my spirits.' Talking to himself was, indeed, one of his singularities ever since I knew him. I was certain that he was frequently uttering pious ejaculations for fragments of the Lord's prayer have been distinctly overheard. His friend, Mr. Thomas Davies, of whom Churchill says, 'That Davies hath a very pretty wife,' when Dr. Johnson muttered, 'lead us not into temptation,' used with waggish and gallant humour to whisper Mrs. Davies, 'You, my dear, are the cause of this.'

"He had another particularity, of which none of his friends ever ventured to ask an explanation. It appeared to me some superstitious habit, which he had contracted early, and from which he had never called upon his reason to disentangle him. This was his anxious care to go out or in at a door or passage by a certain number of steps from a certain point, or at least so as that either his right or his left foot, (I am not certain which), should constantly make the first actual movement when he came close to the door or passage. Thus I conjecture: for I have, upon innumerable occasions, observed him suddenly stop, and then seem to count his steps with a deep earnestness; and when he had neglected or gone wrong in this sort of magical movement, I have seen him go back again, put himself in a proper posture to begin the ceremony, and, having gone through it, break from his abstraction, walk briskly on, and join his companion. Sir Joshua Reynolds has observed him to go a good way about, rather than cross a particular alley in Leicester-fields; but this

Sir Joshua imputed to his having had some disagreeable recollection associated with it.

"That the most minute singularities which belonged to him, and made very observable parts of his appearance and manner, may not be omitted, it is requisite to mention, that while talking or even musing as he sat in his chair, he commonly held his head to one side towards his right shoulder and shook it in a tremulous manner, moving his body backwards and forwards and rubbing his left knee in the same direction, with the palm of his hand. In the intervals of articulating he made various sounds with his mouth, sometimes as if ruminating, or what is called chewing the cud, sometimes giving a half whistle, sometimes making his tongue play backwards from the roof of his mouth, as if clucking like a hen, and sometimes protruding it against his upper gums in front, as if pronouncing quickly under his breath, too, too, too: all this accompanied sometimes with a thoughtful look, but more frequently with a smile. Generally when he had concluded a period, in the course of a dispute, by which time he was a good deal exhausted by violence and vociferation, he used to blow out his breath like a whale. This I supposed was a relief to his lungs; and seemed in him to be contemptuous mode of expression, as if he had made the arguments of his opponent fly like chaff before the wind. I am fully aware, adds Boswell, how very obvious an occasion I here give for the sneering jocularity of such as have no relish of an exact likeness; which to render complete, he who draws it must not disdain the slightest strokes. But if witlings should be inclined to attack this account, let them have the candour to quote what I have offered in my defence."

One very curious manifestation of Dr. Johnson's neurosis was his morbid propensity to incredulity. This was a true obsession or mania with him, a *folie de doute*, and led him into absurd extremes of skepticism. He was incredulous of all reports of abnormal physical phenomena such as floods and earthquakes, and anyone narrating such happenings in his presence was sure to be severely rebuked. Upon an extraordinary circumstance being told "he would say with a significant look and decisive tone, 'It is not so. Do not tell this again.'" "You cannot imagine," he said to a clergyman who had narrated a remarkable happening, "how poor a figure you make. Do not ever tell this story again." Hogarth once said: "Johnson, though

so wise a fellow, is more like King David than King Solomon; for he says in his haste that all men are liars." But curiously enough Johnson's credulity became aroused where most men's ceases; for he gave an attentive audience to stories of supernatural phenomena. He never actually believed in ghosts or spiritualistic manifestations, but he did not oppose their narration with the vehemence which he used in denying easily credible physical phenomena.

Despite the heavy burden of nervous disease, few men have ever been endowed by nature with finer qualities of mind and soul than was Samuel Johnson. In an age of intellectual giants he towered above them all. Read over, for example, the roster of the famous Club: Burke, the greatest orator of his time; Goldsmith, the greatest poet; Reynolds, the first painter; Garrick, the supreme actor; Gibbon, the historian of Ancient Rome; Langton, the erudite Greek scholar—these, and more, were men of broad culture and of eminent special attainments, and yet they unhesitatingly regarded Johnson, the poor, uncouth scholar, as their master. No finer tribute to intellect and character has ever been paid than the homage of men like these for Johnson. He emerged from the age of Grub Street hacks, lone relic of a vanished past, to astonish a generation which knew little of the degradation and misery of a literary life. "Slow rises worth by poverty oppressed," wrote Johnson in his poem "London," and his own struggle against poverty and disease, though leaving indelible marks upon him, never impaired his fine humanity or diminished his love for pure literature. Nor was his spirit in the least broken by the load of misery he carried so long. "Fine lords and ladies," he once said, "do not like to have their mouths stopped by me." He sold his own compositions for a pittance, but always praised the liberality of the booksellers; he was often too indolent to write for himself, but always ready to pour out his talents in a preface or dedication or in rewriting a poem for an acquaintance. He would take home in his arms a poor sick girl of the streets and tenderly nurse her to physical and mental health. His house was an asylum for the poor and miserable, and their constant ingratitude could never weary his patience nor exhaust his benevolence. He ministered to their physical needs while they lived, tenderly buried them when they died, and not infrequently immortalized their lowly lives in poems and epitaphs of deepest beauty. But from these lowly

tasks of humility and charity he would turn to crucify a Lord Chesterfield with a letter such as man never received before or since, "a blast of doom" as Carlyle called it, or to administer a rebuke to a wealthy upstart or a neurotic lady of fashion. He was nature's true nobleman and proudly conscious of his nobility. His singularities and eccentricities were the product of congenital disease, and over them he had little control.

SOME ASPECTS OF THE KNOW-NOTHING MOVEMENT RECONSIDERED

HARRY J. CARMAN AND REINHARD H. LUTHIN

THE CONTROVERSY that emanated from disclosure of Mr. Justice Hugo L. Black's former membership in the Ku-Klux Klan revived memories of the activities of that organization during the nineteen-twenties. All manner of demands and suggestions from both opponents and supporters of Black rolled from lips, pens, and presses seemingly in every town and hamlet. To the historian—his eyes ever turned to the past and reluctant to hazard an analysis of contemporary phenomena—the faintest reappearance of the anti-Catholic, antiforeign issue in American politics recalls the story of two other such organized movements in our history: the Know-Nothing Order of the eighteen-fifties and the American Protective Association of the eighteen-nineties. Although Know-Nothingism, the most significant of the two predecessors of the Klan, was too weak and short-lived to effect any of the ultranationalistic aims it professed, it nevertheless stamped an indelible mark on the volatile politics of its age and brewed earnest enthusiasm and bitter hatred that endured years after the Order itself had passed away. Wherever Know-Nothingism gained a foothold, inevitably it directed its propaganda jointly at Roman Catholic and foreign-born citizens. Indeed, to the ardent Know-Nothing the words "Catholic" and "foreigner" were synonymous. The twin doctrine of the Order—anti-Catholicism and antiforeignism—was usually described by the term "nativism." The sincerity of many Know-Nothings and anti-Know-Nothings was often doubtful, for in the majority of states invaded by the movement the issue served as a mere cloak for issues of far greater moment. Everywhere the character of political nativism was shaped by local and national conditions and events which often had very little connection with nativism itself.

Since colonial times there had been deep suspicion against Catholics in America—a throwback from Europe, where in the sixteenth century had occurred the revolt against the abuses in the Roman Church that were partly responsible for giving birth to Protestantism.

The small but steady flow of Irish Catholics to the United States in the decades immediately following the American Revolution stimulated more anti-Romanist sentiment. Under the surface lay the native Americans' prejudice against aliens whose standards of life were lower, whose religion was different, whose habits were clannish, whose tongue was tinged with a brogue, and whose garb was outlandish. By 1830 certain Protestants became convinced that a plot was afoot to Romanize the Mississippi Valley, so Protestant missionaries were dispatched thither to combat any stray Jesuits in that region. A few years later the organization of the Leopold Association, formed in Vienna to spread Roman Catholicism in the United States, gave innumerable American Protestant clergymen alarm. The organization of this Catholic missionary society was seized upon by many Protestants, including the later inventor of the telegraph, Samuel F. B. Morse, as proof that a Papist intrigue was at work to Catholicize all America. In 1834 Morse wrote a series of articles for a New York newspaper (for which he received remuneration) revealing alleged Jesuit designs to seize control of American society and politics. Thenceforth nativism became garbed in the mantle of patriotism. Protestant propagandists, among them the influential Reverend Lyman Beecher, were indefatigable in spreading reports of supposed insidious doctrines that emanated from the Vatican to American homes. The establishment of military companies in Irish fraternal societies in New York and other large cities was even viewed by some as the actual mobilization of papal forces for the eventual armed conquest of the West. It remained for William H. Seward, then Governor of New York, to precipitate unintentionally the latent anti-Catholicism into militant activity. In his gubernatorial message of 1840 Seward advocated that state funds be allotted to schools wherein the children of foreigners could be instructed "by teachers speaking the same language with themselves and professing the same faith." When in New York City the Catholics, encouraged by Seward's recommendations, demanded public money for their parochial schools, a bitter controversy raged between Catholics and non-Catholics for several years. By 1844 the anti-Catholic American Republican party had been organized, and in that year elected its candidate mayor of New York.

In 1847 the American Republican party expired as a result of dissension and bickering among its leaders and also because the sectional controversy between North and South revolving around slavery came to occupy the spotlight of the political arena. But nativistic sentiment was kept alive throughout the late eighteen-forties by secret anti-Catholic societies. Events in Rome in 1849 also gave nourishment to anti-Catholicism in the United States. In the latter year Pope Pius IX was forced to flee the Holy City, and a Roman Republic was proclaimed by the Italian liberal, Mazzini, and his followers. With the revolution in Italy sharpened down to a contest between monarchical reactionaries and liberal republicans—with the Pope on the side of the reactionaries—certain Americans became confirmed in the belief that Catholicism and republicanism were incompatible; and the action of Emperor Louis Napoleon in restoring the exiled Pius IX to his papal throne and destroying the Roman Republic by the use of French troops, drew violent outbursts from a portion of the American press, including the all-powerful New York *Herald*. Moreover, Horace Greeley's Rome correspondent, Margaret Fuller, had married Ossoli, an Italian republican leader, with the result that the widely read New York *Tribune* gave to its readers a decided anti-Papist viewpoint based on Signora Ossoli's Rome despatches. The action of Bishop Hughes, head of the Roman Catholic diocese of New York, in assailing the Roman Republic, defending the Pope, and ordering special collections among New York Catholics for the benefit of the Holy Father, only increased anti-Catholic feeling in the United States.

The heavy influx to the United States after 1847 of Irish, German, and Scandinavian immigrants added new fuel to the fires of nativism. During the early eighteen-fifties the movement assumed hitherto unheard-of proportions. Anti-Catholic and antiforeign societies of a political nature were organized, the most important of which was the Supreme Order of the Star-Spangled Banner. When questioned regarding the mysteries of their fraternity, its members merely answered, "We know nothing," and they were immediately dubbed "the Know-Nothings"; by the use of such patriotic appelations as "Sam" (an abbreviation of "Uncle Sam") they induced thousands upon thousands to join their society; and in political cam-

paigns, in which they were called the "Know-Nothing party," and later the "American party," the Know-Nothings made profitable use of a slogan supposedly given by George Washington: "Let none but Americans be on guard tonight." In 1853 two events served to provide the Know-Nothings with ammunition in their warfare against Catholics and foreign-born: first, the appointment of James Campbell, a Philadelphia Catholic, as Postmaster-General in President Pierce's Cabinet; second, the visit of Archbishop Gaetano Bedini, the Papal Nuncio, to the United States on a mission to settle the question of administration of Catholic church property in certain American cities. Most successfully did the Know-Nothings charge that the Post Office Department headed by a Catholic would place the government's mail facilities at the disposal of the Catholics in their efforts to destroy Protestantism. As for Bedini, the Know-Nothings' agitation against the Pope's alleged interference in American affairs resulted in the Archbishop's harmless tour through the United States being an almost continual round of anti-Catholic demonstrations; in Cincinnati the Pope's personal envoy found it comfortable to avail himself of police protection as irate mobs charged through the streets shouting, "Down with Bedini; down with Popery!" This antagonism towards Campbell's appointment to the Cabinet and against Bedini's visit was only an expression of a nativism that had its roots implanted in social, political, economic, and psychological circumstances and factors.

Socially, Americans viewed the foreign-born as inferior, unsanitary, intemperate, and as spreaders of discord. The Germans drank too much beer and mocked Puritanical ideas, while the Irish consumed too much whiskey and engaged in bloody brawls. Temperance advocates among New Englanders bitterly complained that efforts to enact prohibition laws were continually blocked by foreign-born voters. Politically, many native Americans were resentful at the power wielded by the foreign-born citizens at the polls and at the large number of public offices which they filled. Whigs in particular were inflamed at the practice of Democratic ward-heelers in arranging with Democratic judges to grant naturalization papers to immigrants just before Election Day, and the defeat of their sainted Henry Clay for the Presidency in 1844 by the votes of Democrats hastily made citizens

rankled in Whig hearts. Economically, American workmen opposed the foreign-born laborers, whom they accused of lowering wages; many businessmen were hostile to immigrants because of what they considered "high" taxes to maintain prisons and almshouses, many of whose inmates were foreign-born; propertied classes became antagonistic toward German radicals and intellectuals whose ultra-liberal ideas were deemed dangerous; many American farmers in the Northwest were infuriated at the shrewd Germans and Scandinavians for settling on the choicest, most fertile lands. Religiously, Americans opposed the Irish Catholics because they owed spiritual allegiance to the Pope (a foreigner), and Catholicism was still branded as inconsistent with Americanism and republicanism; many of the German-born were frowned upon because of their Teutonic habit of picnicing and making merry on the Sabbath. Psychologically, thousands of normally tolerant Americans were capitivated by seductively patriotic appeals and swayed by the printed and spoken propaganda of the Know-Nothings. Indeed, Professor Ray A. Billington of Clark University has located copies of hundreds of different tracts, pamphlets, and books issued by the Know-Nothings. Governor Seward's school message of 1840, in which he recommended public money for parochial schools, was disinterred and given wide publicity in this anti-Catholic, antiforeign campaign.

The entry of nativism into New York politics occurred at a ripe time: the two old parties were weakened by internal dissension, the Whigs dying with no prospect of an issue to revive them, and the Democrats split into three different factions over the spoils of office. With the major parties in such an unhealthy condition, the appearance of such a new and living issue as nativism presented to desperate politicians an issue to aid them against the opposition, and thus the Know-Nothing party became the infirmary of die-hard politicians (especially among the Whigs) who were not above capitalizing on the anti-Catholic, antiforeign sentiment. In the words of Professor George M. Stephenson of the University of Minnesota, the historian of American immigration: "Many who had joined the [Know-Nothing] party were scheming politicians and young men ambitious for political office who played on the string of racial hatred to attract the hosts of political orphans after the demise of the Whig party and the

defection from the Democracy." And it proved comparatively easy to convince American-born voters that American institutions and standards of life were menaced by the Catholics and foreign-born. The platform of the Know-Nothings took the form of demands for more severe immigration laws, a purely American common-school system, war to the hilt on Roman Catholicism, and a twenty-year residence for foreigners before being admitted to citizenship. By the summer of 1854 the movement had grown into a powerful statewide political body in New York, had spread to many parts of the country, and its leaders began to plan for higher flights to power. The fall campaign in New York was at hand.

Between 1850 and 1853 the moderate faction of New York Whigs, led by former President Millard Fillmore, had been put in eclipse by the dominant majority antislavery faction headed by former Governor Seward, who was now United States Senator. When the total collapse of the Whig party came in 1854, many of the Fillmore Whigs, finding themselves with neither a party emblem nor an issue, and refusing to join the Sewardites, found the solution to their future by hoisting the standard of nativism; they became the controlling element in the New York Know-Nothing organization. Still led by Fillmore—who was more concerned with combatting his arch foe Seward and with checking antislavery sentiment than with fighting Catholic and foreign influences—the Empire State Know-Nothings waged a spirited state campaign in the fall of 1854. They nominated for governor a reputable lawyer of mediocre ability, Daniel Ullman, who had for years been knocking at the door of Whig conventions in quest of public office. When the Know-Nothings appeared, Ullman turned to them to advance his burning ambitions; but in the midst of the campaign an ironically embarrassing development occurred to scotch any chance of election that Ullman might have had: He was charged by his opponents with having been born in India of German-Jewish parents and with not even being a naturalized citizen! Whether the charge was true or not did not matter. His opponents made the most of this spectacle of an antiforeign party running a gubernatorial candidate of Asiatic birth who might not even be eligible to take office if elected; henceforth Fillmore's nativist followers became known as "Hindoos." In vain did Ullman feebly

and evasively protest that he was born in Delaware. The anti-nativists themselves effectively indulged in nativism by pleading with the voters not to place a "turban-headed Jewish Oriental" in the governor's chair at Albany. The nominal Whig, State Senator Myron H. Clark, campaigning on his record as a temperance advocate and backed by the Seward machine and rural prohibitionists, was elected governor over two Democratic rivals and Ullman. The "Hindoo," however, polled the amazing total of over 122,000 votes out of some 470,000 cast. Ullman's impressive showing against the older parties and against the handicap of alleged Asiatic birth lent added prestige to the Know-Nothing order, which grew even more powerful during the next year.

The Know-Nothings manifested an extraordinary interest in the session of the legislature that convened at Albany in January, 1855. Their old foe, Seward, was up for re-election as United States Senator. They worked feverishly among the legislators to defeat him, and an organized nativist lobby was sent to the state capitol to operate among the members who had not decided for whom to vote for Senator. Moral suasion was one technique used by them in their effort to end the distinguished New Yorker's career in the upper house of Congress. A novel entitled *Stanhope Burleigh: The Jesuits in Our Homes* had been written by C. Edwards Lester, a popular author and Know-Nothing enthusiast, under the pseudonym of "Helen Dhu," among whose characters were recognizable the personalities of Seward, Seward's political manager Thurlow Weed, Horace Greeley, Bishop Hughes, and other enemies of nativism. Interwoven with the love story of the heroine, the novel related under its fictitious names how Seward and his followers had bartered away loyalty to American institutions for Catholic votes and how the Catholic conquest of the United States was soon to follow. A copy of this volume was sent to each member of the legislature to influence his vote on the United States senatorship. But the Know-Nothings had reckoned without the wizardry of Seward's Warwick—Thurlow Weed, a personality whose uncanny skill and genius in practical politics and wirepulling can be compared perhaps only with that of a Mark Hanna or a James A. Farley. Assuming his accustomed role of Seward's floor-manager in the state capitol, Weed dangled the

sweets of patronage before wavering members and also nursed the affections of an insurgent faction within the Know-Nothing organization. After a solid month of nerve-racking, behind-the-scenes activity, Weed succeeded in temporarily driving a wedge into the nativist forces in the legislature. So decisively did he out-general the Know-Nothing high command that twelve legislators who belonged to Know-Nothing lodges and others who had given promises to the Order actually voted for Seward's return to the United States Senate. The bolt of a portion of the nativists to Seward, who had been so denunciatory of their principles and who had called for more immigrants to build up the country, indicated that the anti-Catholic and antiforeign crusade was used by ambitious politicians to further their ends, to be discarded whenever such use was no longer needed.

In other Northern states the Know-Nothings fared even better than in New York in the 1854 elections. Especially was this true in Massachusetts, where great hordes of immigrants, Irish Catholics almost to a man, caused alarm and indignation to native-born citizens by their competition with native labor and their insistence on wield ing political power. Francis DeWitt in his *Abstract of Massachusetts Census* estimated that between 1850 and 1855 the foreign-born voters of Boston increased 194.64 per cent while the American-born voters in that city increased only 14.12 per cent. Massachusetts nativism was tightly entertwined with the antislavery cause, for most of the Free-Soilers in that state, believing that a new political party was necessary if the spread of Negro slavery were to be checked, entered the Know-Nothing ranks—again indicating that many championed this violently pro-American cause for the sole purpose of making it serve ends which were quite irrelevant to warfare against the Catholics and foreign-born. Quite justifiably did Abraham Lincoln, writing the Abolitionist Owen Lovejoy in 1855, remark of certain Know Nothings: "Indeed, I do not perceive how any professing to be sensitive to the wrongs of the Negro, can join in a league to degrade a class of white men." But to search for the logical in practical pol itics is often to search for the impossible. With thousands of American-born citizens in the Bay State aroused by the Irish invasion of Boston and other cities, and with thousands of Free-Soilers in the state intent on capturing the Know-Nothing party machinery, it is

small wonder that nativism became more powerful in New England's leading commonwealth than in any other state. The 1854 election gave to Massachusetts a Know-Nothing governor, Henry J. Gardner, by an overwhelming majority, an almost unanimous Know-Nothing legislature, and a solid Know-Nothing delegation to Congress —probably the most amazing political landslide the state has ever witnessed. When the legislature convened at Boston in January, 1855, the topheavy Know-Nothing majority elected one of its number, Henry Wilson, to the United States Senate. Wilson, a future Vice-President of the United States, was only one of the many who hitched their fortunes to the nativist star and soared to political heights. The historian, James Ford Rhodes, who knew many of Wilson's associates intimately, wrote: "Wilson . . . was ambitious for place, and he saw in the craze of the moment a convenient stepping-stone to political position. Although refused admission to one Know-Nothing lodge, he persisted in his purpose, and succeeded afterwards in getting regularly initiated in another."

The fire of anti-Catholicism and antiforeignism that swept over the North found fuel for a steady but hot glow when it blazed south over Mason and Dixon's line. In the South, as in the North, Know-Nothingism became linked with the sectional conflict of interests between North and South over slavery. The election of 1852 and the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act less than two years later had combined to administer the deathblow to the Whig party as a national organization. By the middle of 1854 the Whigs had become permanently split into a Northern antislavery wing and a Southern proslavery wing, each wing having nothing in common with the other except a realization that the interests of their respective sections seemed irreconcilable and that each must go its separate way. Thereupon the Southern Whigs either entered the Democratic party, which could be depended upon to protect slavery and other Southern institutions; or, like many of their Northern brethren with whom they had come to the parting of the ways, they entered the Know-Nothing party. Four main considerations induced Whigs below the Potomac to flock to Know-Nothingism. Firstly, the Southerners realized all too well that the ever growing political and economic preponderance of the North over the South was due partly

to European immigration, since most of the immigrants settled in the Northern States. Secondly, the Southerners noted with hostility that the immigrants, especially the Germans, landed in the United States with preconceived prejudices against slavery, with a dislike of Southern aristocracy, and with a determination to work as "free" farmers in the shirt-sleeve society of the Northwest. Thirdly, the belief that nativism might prove a rallying point under which moderate Northerners and Southerners would gather to combat Northern antislavery fanatics and Southern fire-eaters, induced certain nationally minded Southerners to join the Know-Nothings. For a time Senator John Bell of Tennessee even clung to the hope that conservative Republicans and calm Southern Whigs might get together on a program to prevent secession. Fourthly, the Southerners had concluded that German immigrants in certain of their cities, such as New Orleans, Baltimore, and St. Louis, were spreaders of discord; in this connection it is relevant to recall that New Orleans, next to New York, was the largest immigrant landing-place of all American ports.

In 1855 Know-Nothingism, both North and South, reached the peak of its power. In that year the movement continued to be more greedily seized upon than ever by political leaders whose purposes gave promise of being subserved by it; the voters, too, became ever more charmed by its patriotism; nay, even mysticism. From Maine to Iowa and over the prairies and mountains to California in the North, and from Maryland to Texas in the South, the federated secret councils grasped power. In Springfield, Illinois, in this same year the Abolitionist Owen Lovejoy was urging Abraham Lincoln, who still clung to the moribund Whig party, to join the "fusion" or Republican party. But the shrewd Lincoln, deciding not to risk his career by a premature entrance into an infant organization, declined Lovejoy's invitation. He realized that so long as the Know-Nothings maintained their own political organization, the Republican party could never hope to grow. In a significant reply to Lovejoy, dated August 11, 1855, and published in 1917 by Gilbert A. Tracy in *Uncollected Letters of Abraham Lincoln*, the future Man of Destiny wrote:

> Yours of the 7th. was received the day before yesterday. Not even you are more anxious to prevent the extension of slavery than I. And

yet the political atmosphere is such, just now, that I fear to do anything, lest I do wrong. Know Nothingism has not yet entirely tumbled to pieces. Nay, it is even a little encouraged by the late elections in Tennessee, Kentucky and Alabama. Until we can get the elements of this organization there is not sufficient material to successfully combat the Nebraska democracy with. We cannot get them so long as they cling to a hope of success under their own organization; and I fear an open push now may offend them and tend to prevent our ever getting them. About us here, they are mostly my old political and personal friends, and I have hoped this organization would die out without the painful necessity of my taking an open stand against them. Of their principles I think little better than I do of those of slavery extensionists. Indeed I do not perceive how any professing to be sensitive to the wrongs of the negro, can join in a league to degrade a class of white men. I have no objection to "fuse" with any body provided I can fuse on grounds which I think right. And I believe the opponents of slavery extension could now do this if it were not for the K.N.ism.

One glaring trait of Know-Nothingism in general stands conspicuous: its inconsistency, its incongruity, its lack of unity as a national movement. In the North it was largely antislavery, while in the South it was entirely proslavery. Specifically, the instability of nativism may be found in the circumstance, for instance, that in Wisconsin, to which thousands upon thousands of immigrants rushed, the Know-Nothings secured only a comparatively weak hold on the popular heart; while in Virginia, where only a few thousand immigrants settled, it had a strong hold. This paradox might perhaps be partially explained by the economic situation in the two sections: in the North the rising industrialism of the East and its ally, the "free" farming economy of the West, were hostile to the slave states who held a veto power in the Senate; while the South, with its system of life and labor based on slavery, viewed with alarm the growing power of the North which was being accelerated by the flood of immigration during the late forties and early fifties. In the case of Wisconsin there were great stretches of virgin lands waiting to be exploited, and Western land speculators and Eastern railroad builders alike encouraged immigration to that state and other states of the Northwest. In the case of Virginia the dominant class, composed of slaveholders (not land speculators nor railroad builders),

were interested primarily in protecting the slave system. Consequently, it was intent on restricting a white European immigration which not only was developing the North in wealth, industry and population, but might even settle in the South some day to compete with the slave-plantation labor system. This open-arms attitude of the most influential Northern groups toward immigration and the equally ardent hostility of the most influential Southern groups toward immigration is clearly apparent after examining many of the activities and speeches of political leaders in both sections. John M. Berrien, veteran Georgia Whig who had served long in the United States Senate, and had then joined the Know-Nothing party in his state, warned his Southern constituents to remember "That these emigrants, shunning the South, from their unwillingness to compete with slave labor, and flocking to the North, from their abolition tendencies, in search of kindred spirits, are rapidly increasing the majority against you in Congress."

Former Senator Jeremiah Clemens of Alabama openly charged that "the foreign hack-driver, drayman, ditcher or hod-carrier has no desire to compete for his wages against the Negro. Even the Irish chambermaid looks with jealousy upon the employment of Negro girls in our hotels."

Former Governor Smith of Virginia declared in 1855: "The North has fifty-five more representatives than the South already. . . . Foreignism brings 500,000 who settle in the free states, with interests against slavery, making 50 representatives in ten years, to swell the opposition to the South!"

As for the Northern statesmen, the career of Massachusetts' Know-Nothing Senator, Henry Wilson, is enlightening. As soon as he was elected to the Senate he forgot nativism and quickly became a zealous spokesman for the interests of Massachusetts and the North. Indeed, in later years we find him apparently taking deep pleasure in writing three thick volumes entitled *History of the Rise and Fall of the Slave Power in America.*

But perhaps this close connection between nativism and the slavery issue in American politics—the manner in which the Know-Nothing movement became entangled in the antislavery web of the North and the proslavery web of the South—may be better illustrated by

referring to the Congressional debates on the Homestead Bill in 1854. On March 6 the House of Representatives, with a Northern majority, passed such a bill, giving 160 acres of free land to immigrants as well as to native-born, this on condition that the immigrant had filed his intention of becoming a naturalized citizen. When the bill reached the Senate a contest between spokesmen of the North and South was at once precipitated.

Senator Benjamin F. Wade of Ohio, whose frontier state was already benefiting from an influx of immigrants, moved an amendment to the Senate Homestead Bill which would give to foreign immigrants the same rights as native-born Americans in securing 160 acres of free land.

Senator John B. Thompson of the slave state of Kentucky immediately assailed Wade's amendment. Denouncing the typical land-greedy German with his "broad figure, which it would take three generations to lick into the shape of an American gentleman," the Kentuckian touched the heart of the South's hostility to homestead legislation when he declared: "Is there a southern man, who has a regard for his constituency, or the interest of the section which he represents, who intends—as he knows it is a foregone conclusion that this is all to be free-soil territory—to let them (the immigrants) take it, and let them snatch it away from them, and say that men from the South are not to go into it, because they are tainted with a nigger?"

In July the bill came up for consideration again. Senator John M. Clayton of the slave state of Delaware, which had a large Know-Nothing influence, moved an amendment striking out the provision that made foreigners eligible for the 160 acres of free land as soon as they had filed intention of becoming citizens.

In speaking on the Homestead Bill, Senator Clement C. Clay of the slave state of Alabama warned on July 12: "A great deal has been said here in condemnation of what are called Native Americans or Know-Nothings. I am neither one nor the other in the political sense of those terms; but . . . I tell him [Senator Augustus C. Dodge of Iowa, a supporter of Homestead] that, if this bill pass, he will see realized what I had hoped never to witness in this country: he will see a Native American or Know-Nothing party growing up in the southern states of this Union." Shortly after Senator Salmon

P. Chase of Ohio introduced an amendment to the Homestead Bill which specifically provided that even immigrants who arrived *after* the passage of the bill would be eligible to receive 160 acres of land if they settled on it. Chase's motion was defeated on July 14, but every affirmative vote, except that of Bayard of Delaware, came from Northern Senators. In the end the Southern Senators succeeded in defeating the Homestead Bill itself, which in the national campaign in 1860 proved a boon to the young Republican party and enabled it to carry the Western States and, consequently, the election.

When its economic interests were at stake, groups in both North and South took all forms of contradictory and illogical stands on nativism; but in almost every instance economic considerations overshadowed; in other words, the tangible triumphed over the intangible. Such is but one of the highly complex aspects that confronts the student of the Know-Nothing phenomenon, or any investigator who endeavors to untangle the labyrinth of social, economic, religious and psychological forces underlying political history. But one generalization may be confidently stated: the sectional controversy between North and South, soon to be settled on the battlefield, blasted the Know-Nothing Order. And the fatal sickness from which the organization finally succumbed was contracted in acute form in 1856.

With the opening of that year boasts were freely heard that the votes of the Know-Nothing Order would choose the next President of the United States in the coming November election. The Know-Nothings, now styling themselves the "American party," made an early start. On February 22 their National Convention assembled in Philadelphia. Incidentally it was characteristic of the Know-Nothings to wrap themselves in the mantle of patriotism whenever occasion offered, and in gathering on George Washington's Birthday in the city where both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were born, they were merely running true to form. A minority of the delegates insisted that the American party be put on record as opposing the extension of slavery, but were voted down. The Convention, ignoring the slavery question, then nominated former President Fillmore for President, and Andrew Jackson Donelson of Tennessee, nephew and namesake of "Old Hickory," for Vice-President. They also adopted a typical nativist platform. Although

the "Americans" at Philadelphia attempted to dodge the slavery issue, a small group of Republicans, meeting in Pittsburgh on this same day (February 22, 1856), did not. The new Republican party was organized on a national basis and a convention called for the following June. Desertions from the "American" Convention came right then and there, for many of the nativist minority at the Philadelphia gathering, who had been outvoted on the slavery issue, deserted to the Republicans. On February 23 the Republicans were moved to ecstasy when the following message from the Know-Nothing delegates came speeding over the wires: "The American Party are no longer united. Raise the Republican banner! Let there be no further extension of slavery! The Americans are with you!"

Stirring events followed in the next three months. The troubles between proslavery and antislavery groups in Kansas went from bad to worse, even to the extreme of bloodshed; and in May occurred the physical attack on the antislavery Senator, Charles Sumner of Massachusetts, by Congressman Preston S. Brooks of South Carolina—events that injected new vitality into the Republican party. Thousands upon thousands of "Americans" flocked to the new party. That the rise of Republicanism was smothering Know-Nothingism in the spring of 1856 was evidenced by the fact that a few days after the Sumner-Brooks affair, Lincoln—who since 1854 had carefully refrained from joining the Republican party largely because the Know-Nothing organization was still strong—formally entered the party of which he was destined to become the patron saint. Less than a month later, in June, the Republicans—helped by the horrible picture of a bleeding Kansas and an injured Sumner in the popular Northern imagination—held their first National Convention at Philadelphia. John C. Frémont, the picturesque but politically incompetent explorer and soldier of fortune, was nominated as the Republican candidate for President on a platform opposing the further extension of slavery in free territory. The Republican platform was summed up in the slogan: "Free Speech, Free Press, Free Men, Free Labor, and Frémont."

Before the Republican Convention met, the "Americans"—who had seceded from the American Party Convention which had nominated Fillmore at Philadelphia in February (now called "North

Americans")—had held a separate convention and selected Nathaniel P. Banks of Massachusetts as their candidate for President. Banks declined. When the "North Americans" reassembled they nominated Frémont. This action was only one of the many evidences of the shift of Know-Nothings to the Republican party.

The presidential campaign of 1856 was soon in full swing: Buchanan, a Pennsylvanian ardently friendly to the South, had been nominated as the Democratic candidate; Frémont, the Republican candidate, campaigned on an antislavery platform; Fillmore, a New Yorker and former President of the United States, confident that nativism and its party machinery might be made the instrument by which the North and South could be kept together, headed the "American party" ticket. It was soon evident that sectional issues had overshadowed political nativism; when the interests of the respective sections were at stake, the menace of Catholicism and the foreign-born sank into insignificance. Seasoned critics of the political scene clearly foresaw that the Know-Nothing Order was at the beginning of its end.

The Republicans prayed for a large Fillmore vote in the South, hoping that by splitting the Southern vote between the former President and Buchanan, Frémont might thus be able to slip into the White House. But such hopes were soon dashed. Most of the "South Americans" (as the Southern Know-Nothings were called) were quite as eager to protect the interests of their section as were the "North Americans" theirs. Below Mason and Dixon's line a strong conviction had long been felt that Fillmore (however much the South could trust him) could not be elected under any circumstances, and that a division of the Southern vote between the former President and Buchanan, the Democrat, might make possible the election of the hated Republican—Frémont—campaigning on an antislavery platform. Accordingly, most of the "South Americans" bade a final farewell to their old associations and made their way into the Democratic camp to support Buchanan, who was as tried and true a Northern friend of the South as was Fillmore. Only John J. Crittenden of Kentucky, John Bell of Tennessee, Willie P. Mangum of North Carolina, and a few other old men took the stump for Fill-

more in the South. Maryland alone cast her electoral votes for the standard-bearer of the "Save the Union"-nativist ticket.

In examining some of the aspects of the campaign of 1856 there might well be cause for amazement at the spontaneity with which erstwhile Know-Nothings and Germans—hostile as they were—flocked to the Republican party. The large number of nativists who found refuge in the new party was made apparent by the campaign strategy of the Democrats who, in order to check the wholesale desertions of "North Americans" to the Republican ranks, made the fabulous charge that Frémont was a Catholic. Indeed, Henry Ward Beecher and a Republican Committee, in order to satisfy the nativists, found it expedient to interview Frémont in order to ascertain if he were tainted with Romanism. The Republicans, on their side, defended the bolt of "North Americans" to their party; they asserted that Fillmore was not a real Know-Nothing, having never in his life attended a meeting of the Order; that he (Fillmore) had been nominated as the "American" candidate by convention intrigue rather than by popular acclaim, and that he was forced upon the Order by pro-slavery interests. The countless number of Germans who entered the Republican ranks in the campaign of 1856 in all probability accounts for the time and attention which that sagacious political observer, Abraham Lincoln, gave to the German settlement in Illinois when he stumped the state for Frémont. Referring to the large enthusiastic German audiences who had greeted him in different parts of the state, he closed his speech at the teutonic settlement of Belleville with the benediction: "God Bless the Dutch."

With some exceptions, historians concerned with the American Civil War have viewed the struggle in moral terms of "Freedom *versus* Slavery." In nearly all cases they have been inclined to minimize the importance of nativism after the breakup of the Know-Nothing Order in the late 1850's. But as late as 1860 it was still a vital factor and helped to divert the streams of history into various channels. On the eve of the Republican National Convention at Chicago in May, 1860, nativist sentiment still survived in Pennsylvania, Indiana, New Jersey, Illinois, and Massachusetts. As late as May, 1859, Bay State voters, alarmed at the changing character of the state's population, had ratified an amendment to their Constitu-

tion, the so-called Massachusetts Two-Year Amendment, providing that no naturalized citizen could vote or hold office in that commonwealth until a two-year probationary period, after being naturalized, had been served.

The nativists had to be won by the Republicans either by platform promises or in the person of the presidential candidate selected. And this for no other reason than because of the large number of men who had formerly been Know-Nothings and who had deserted their party to join the Republicans. The nativist issue at the Chicago Convention bulked large, since Seward—leading contender for the nomination—had long fought the nativists in New York; and to them he was anathema.

As it turned out, nativism proved a mighty influence in effecting the nomination of Lincoln as the Republican candidate for President in so far as it proved an effective instrument in the hands of those who opposed the nomination of Seward, who led Lincoln on the first two ballots taken. Although the naming of Lincoln as the Republican standard-bearer at Chicago continues to be a mystery to the layman and a perplexity to the scholar, enough genuine research has been done to indicate the extent to which Seward's opponents, linking hands with Lincoln's small clique of Illinois politicians and editors, were enabled to draw support to the future Great Emancipator by arguing that the antinativist Seward, if nominated, could not carry two pivotal states—Pennsylvania and Indiana—which still contained (they claimed) large groups of Know-Nothings. This argument was used with good effect particularly by the anti-Seward leaders of Pennsylvania, the state which, next to New York, had the largest convention and electoral vote, and the state whose switch to Lincoln started the bandwagon rush to the Illinois contender on the third ballot.

Next to Seward and Lincoln, the contender with the most votes for the nomination was Edward Bates of Missouri. He, too, was removed from Lincoln's path to the White House by the injection of the nativist issue. Bates, who was being supported for the Republican nomination by strong groups on the ground that a conservative border-state President might stave off the threatened secession of the Southern States, had been unfortunate enough to have consorted with Missouri Know-Nothings and to have presided over the last National

Whig Convention which endorsed Fillmore for President on the "American" ticket in 1856. Just as the anti-Seward forces capitalized on Seward's former antinativism, so did the anti-Bates men (particularly the Germans, among whom Lincoln was a favorite) capitalize on Bates's former nativism.

Most of the practical political leaders who sat in the saddle at the Chicago Convention in 1860 fully realized that the foreign-born voters, particularly the Germans, held the balance of power between the Republican and Democratic parties at the ballot box. They even allowed the German leaders to write the "homestead" section in the platform and thus this proposal favoring 160 acres of free land to actual settlers became known as the "Dutch plank." And their catering to the Germans was sagacious in the extreme, for the Germans, hostile to slavery and anxious for "free land," went Republican in such large numbers in 1860 that to find a German-born voter was to find a Republican. The wrecking of Bates's candidacy for the Republican presidential nomination in 1860 was planned and executed by German politicians, editors, and professional men who were fearful lest the Massachusetts "*zwei-Jahr*" amendment should be copied by other states. Two days before the Republican National Convention met, these German leaders came together in a long-planned conference at the Deutsches Haus, a German fraternal and social center in Chicago. There with teutonic bluntness they drew up an ultimatum and presented it to the delegates of the Republican Convention who were arriving in the city. This ultimatum warned in emphatic terms that if any candidate with nativist connections (and this was aimed at Bates) was nominated for President these German-born leaders and their followers would bolt the Republican ticket in the general election. This threat frightened innumerable delegates into deserting Bates, although the latter had such powerful backers as Horace Greeley and the Blair family. It is significant to note that Lincoln's trusted friend and head of the Illinois delegation, the German-born former Lieutenant-Governor Gustave Körner, was active in the Deutsches Haus conference that blasted Bates's chance. Moreover, Lincoln had assisted George Schneider, editor of the Illinois *Staats-Zeitung*, in incorporating into the Illinois State Republican platform of 1856 a plank favoring equal rights for all citizens "without regard

to the place of their birth." Furthermore, in 1859 Lincoln had written to Dr. Theodore Canisius, editor of the Springfield (Illinois) *Staats-Anzeiger*, declaring his opposition to the Massachusetts Two-Year Amendment, but he carefully refrained from denouncing the Know-Nothings. It is easy, therefore, to understand why Lincoln was readily acceptable to the German leaders as a candidate. Of the countless biographers of Lincoln, Josiah G. Holland, who with Samuel Bowles edited the Springfield (Massachusetts) *Republican*, was the only one who fully appreciated the value of Lincoln's reply to Canisius in securing the presidential nomination. Holland's *Lincoln* was published in 1866. Many years later the conclusions of Holland were substantiated by the scholarly research of Professor F. I. Herriott and embodied in an article entitled "The Premises and Significance of Abraham Lincoln's Letter to Theodore Canisius," published in Volume XV of the *Yearbook of the German-American Historical Society of Illinois*. Thus did Lincoln, without once having denounced the Know-Nothings, receive the support of the Pennsylvanians and Indianians who would have no part of the anti-nativistic Seward. He also received the support of the Germans who would have none of the nativistic Bates. No less important, he received the support of that great horde of practical politicians at the Chicago Convention who were intent on victory in November and who wanted no nativist issue—pro or con—injected into the campaign to embarrass their candidate who was to campaign on a protective tariff-Pacific railroad-homestead-antislavery platform.

The Democratic party split in 1860, the Northern wing nominating Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, and the Southern wing nominating John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky. The remnants of the American party in the North which had not gone over to the Republicans, and the remnants of the American party in the South which had not gone over to the Southern Democrats, combined with the last surviving die-hard Whigs and nominated John Bell of Tennessee for President under the banner of the so-called Constitutional Union party. But their platform, designed to attract lovers of the Union in an effort to prevent secession, avoided the nativistic tirade against Catholics and foreign-born and simply stressed "the Constitution of the Country, the Union of the States, and the enforcement of the

laws." Bell carried but three states: Tennessee, Kentucky, and Virginia.

This critical campaign of 1860, perhaps the most momentous in all American history, was interesting from the angle of various states, particularly Pennsylvania, which, next to New York, cast the largest electoral vote and whose allegedly strong nativist sentiment had been used so effectively by the anti-Seward groups to defeat Seward at the Chicago Convention. The predominating issue in the state was the protective tariff, not Know-Nothingism. This is clearly established by Dr. Malcolm R. Eiselin in his monograph *The Rise of Pennsylvania Protectionism*, published in 1932, and by Dr. Stanton L. Davis in his study *Pennsylvania Politics, 1860-1863*, which appeared in 1935. It is also evident from the campaign conducted in 1860 by Andrew G. Curtin, Republican candidate for Governor of Pennsylvania, who while on the stump talked continually not of Know-Nothingism nor antislavery, but of protection to the state's manufacturing interests. The insignificance of the actual Know-Nothing strength is clearly set forth by Alexander K. McClure who had charge of the Republican campaign in the state. In his memoirs, *Old Time Notes of Pennsylvania*, McClure relates how a handful of Know-Nothings were opposing Curtin because the gubernatorial candidate was alleged to be Catholic. McClure writes:

> The Know Nothing defection was a purely commercial transaction, and I was offered the restoration of harmonious relations between that Order and Curtin for the sum of $2,500. . . . They claimed that they had 13,000 voters in the Know-Nothing lodges of the city, and it became very important to ascertain the force they had. I called upon Mayor Henry and asked his permission to have the police estimate them, as it could well be done in the different parts of the city, but he peremptorily refused to allow the police to perform any such political duty. Fortunately his chief of police was more liberally inclined, and inside of a week he brought me a careful enumeration of the entire number of Know-Nothings yet remaining in connection with the secret lodges as 2,300, and they exhibited within 100 of that number in the election returns, where they had acted in concert and their vote could be accurately estimated.

It may well be that the anti-Seward forces at Chicago purposely exaggerated the Know-Nothing strength in Pennsylvania to weaken

Seward's candidacy. Unquestionably Seward was sound on the high protective tariff issue. The doom of the political nativism of the 1850's was sealed by being overshadowed by the larger issue of sectionalism and approaching civil war, and also by the decisive role which the German-born voters played in insuring Lincoln's victory. Well founded indeed was the prediction of Carl Schurz, that without most of the foreign-born vote Lincoln could not have carried the Northwest; and without the Northwest, or with its vote divided, he would have been defeated. William E. Dodd, in his analysis of the campaign of 1860, published in July, 1911, in *The American Historical Review,* emphasizes that a change of one vote in twenty in the Northwest would have made Lincoln a defeated Republican candidate instead of a victorious President. Dodd concluded: "The election of Lincoln and, as it turned out, the fate of the Union were thus determined not by native Americans but by voters who knew least of American history and institutions." And this estimate is ably supported by Dr. Donnal V. Smith's later study of the census, election returns, and other factors of the 1860 campaign, published in the September, 1932, issue of *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review.*

The election of Lincoln was the signal for South Carolina to lead the Southern States out of the Union. With the nation engulfed in civil war from 1861 to 1865, then dragged into more strife during Reconstruction, and then concerned with the problems of a rising industrialism during the 1870's and 1880's, political nativism largely disappeared except in isolated communities, to reappear in the 1890's under the guise of the American Protective Association. This latter organization was not the robust child of intolerance and troubled times that the Know-Nothing Order was, and it had disappeared by the early 1900's. Political nativism reared its head once more in the 1920's under the sponsorship of the Ku-Klux Klan. And there is no certainty that it may not again, sometime, lift its head to remind us of its past.

B·O·O·K·S

THE MOBILIZATION OF PUBLIC OPINION

WORDS THAT WON THE WAR: *The Story of the Committee on Public Information, 1917-1919.* By James R. Mock and Cedric Larson. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1939. Pp. xv, 372. $3.75.

This is a timely and important book. There are numerous reasons why most Americans are at present opposed to this country's entrance into the European war, but by no means the least influential of them is the fear that the inevitable concentration of power would irreparably damage, if not destroy, our democratic institutions. The inquiry is therefore pertinent whether our experiences as a belligerent in 1917-1918 throw any light upon the pitfalls to be avoided should the danger of involvement again become a reality.

Every country at war must somehow mobilize public opinion and, if necessary, suppress dangerous dissent. These problems in their connection with freedom of speech and the press are the theme of this first comprehensive study of Mr. George Creel's famous Committee on Public Information. It is based largely upon the surviving records (one wonders what the "unexplained reasons" were for the disappearance of three quarters of the original documents) now deposited in the National Archives, and the authors are members of the staff of that institution. The conclusions are, on the whole, reassuring. The constitutional guarantees of free speech and press obviously survived the war; but it is less well known that the administration used the extensive powers of censorship conferred upon it by a willing Congress with surprising moderation. Indeed, Mr. Creel is clearly innocent of the most serious charges brought against him during the war; they seem to have been inspired either by unfounded suspicion or by prejudices arising out of his earlier "muckraking" journalistic activities. He stood just as firmly against an ironclad censorship as President Wilson. The machinery of censorship did exist quite apart from Mr. Creel's committee, he did in fact use it when necessary, but he preferred from the beginning that the press should act as its own censor and to set in motion such an overwhelming flood of officially approved news and opinion as to drown out all dissent. Until the enormous mass of editorial opinion has been thoroughly examined, a forbidding task which the authors have not undertaken, it would be venturesome to say that this policy was entirely successful, but it seems on the face of existing

evidence to have worked sufficiently well. Whether or not this procedure might eventually have become just as dangerous to free discussion as an intelligently administered censorship, if such a thing is possible, is a problem which the authors do not and the reviewer lacks the space to discuss.

Much of the substance of this book may be found in its first chapter; the others contain a description and analysis of the committee's far-flung activities. There is an interesting account of the army of Four-Minute Men, whose work will in the future be largely done by broadcasters, of the efforts to stimulate the "voluntary" co-operation of foreign language groups and newspapers, and of the complications that resulted from the relations between capital and labor. For the first time, to the reviewer's knowledge, the full story is told here of the work of the Division of Civic and Educational Co-operation under the direction of Dean Guy Stanton Ford, now the President of the University of Minnesota, in enlisting numerous distinguished historians and others in the preparation of pamphlets whose circulation mounted into the millions. Only less important than the main task of uniting all Americans behind President Wilson's war policy was the committee's work abroad in winning support among the peoples of the Allied countries for his peace program, an effort that encountered discouraging obstacles, and in breaking down the morale of the German people in co-operation with the Allies' propaganda organizations.

In the authors' opinion, the committee was "a social innovation brilliantly conceived and in many ways brilliantly executed." A final chapter, "Blueprint for Tomorrow's CPI," shows that the plans for mobilizing opinion in another war follow the lines marked out by the Creel committee. "Improvements . . . would undoubtedly be made, but if another war should come to this country, no American would need to read the story of the CPI. He would relive it." And, let it be added, he will be fortunate indeed if the new experience has no more harmful effect upon his liberties than that of the Creel committee.

E. Malcolm Carroll.

AMERICAN POLICY IN THE FAR EAST

The Far Eastern Policy of the United States. By A. Whitney Griswold. New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1938. Pp. 530. $3.75.

The spring of 1940 may go down in American history as one of those periods in which the United States faced a supreme decision of peace or war. The chances of military conflict, sought as such, are slight, but the

opportunities for embroilment in the Far East are probably greater than ever before. The European struggle has removed all great powers but three from the East Asiatic scene: the Soviet Union, Japan, and the United States. Between them, these three have the opportunity to decide the future of a nation which is potentially as great a polity and economy as any one of them, and the control or friendship of which will do much to determine the long-run future of the civilizations bordering on the Pacific. The relative impotence of the European states has given the Japanese their opportunity. The Hitler-Stalin agreement has freed the Soviet Union somewhat more for action in the East. The American denunciation of the trade treaty with Japan sets a flexible but nevertheless serious deadline for the decision: what, exactly, is this country going to do about aggression in the Far East? What are we going to do about the unwelcome trusteeship of British, French, and Dutch possessions which is being given us piecemeal?

It is fortunate for political leaders, citizens, and students that at this time Professor Griswold has produced an admirable résumé of the policy of the United States in Eastern Asia for the past thirty years. No work of such clarity, scholarship, or completeness has been available hitherto. From the Far Eastern implications of the Spanish War to the current policy of the Roosevelt administration, the author has summed up the outstanding phases and directions of American activity, with its curious mixture of indecision, remoteness, benevolence, Sinophilia, and self-interest. Diplomatic rather than socio-political in stress, the volume provides a careful outline of the activities and motives of several generations of American leaders in dealing with East Asia. John Hay, Theodore Roosevelt, Philander Knox, Willard Straight, Woodrow Wilson and his associates, the participants in the Washington Conference, the leaders in the immigration debate, down to Henry Stimson and Cordell Hull, the American statesmen and politicians appear. The author has made free use of collections of unpublished papers, and diplomatic and historical materials from a dozen countries. In so far as his aim has been to provide a realistic, almost cold recapitulation of the choosing and implementing of American policy, together with its immediate effects in the Far East, he has succeeded admirably well.

Persons wholly unacquainted with the Far East, however, may feel that they need to orient themselves as to national character, political traditions, and economic backgrounds of the states treated. The author does not pretend to construct a new policy and recommend it; his are the criticisms of the historian, not of the publicist. The realism of the work occasionally approaches the cynical, in its estimate of such noneconomic

intangibles as political faiths and national ideas, factors which complicate *Realpolitik* even when they do not control it. The coolness, deftness, and precision of the approach emphasize definite things and definite interests, and tend to minimize equally valid and sometimes even more potent considerations of what used to be called national honor, humane sentiment, and political sympathy. Such criticism is, however, rather a demand for another book, based upon the judgment and opinion of the author, than a complaint against this one.

PAUL M. A. LINEBARGER.

A DIPLOMAT, THEN A POET

MATTHEW PRIOR: *Poet and Diplomatist.* By Charles Kenneth Eves. New York: Columbia University Press, 1939. Pp. 436. $4.00.

Mr. Eves seems worried by the tendency in previous biographers of Prior to stress the poet's humble origin and find in that the explanation for certain repelling aspects of his character. To combat this view he finds meager suggestions of gentility in the records of the Priors—even a wraithlike coat-of-arms that does not quite settle down on the proper branch of the family—and connects the poet vaguely through his mother with the Pennefather family long settled in Warwickshire. All that does not interest us very much, and actually Mr. Eves pays little attention to it after the first chapter. What we are interested in is whether Matthew Prior carried the "pint-boy" mentality with him throughout life, whether he was always ready to cry "Anon, anon, sir" to the next man who struggled up to the bar and started giving orders. On that point Mr. Eves keeps the balance admirably steady. He leads us through the superabundant records of Prior's diplomatic career, refuses to be diverted by the numerous side-issues of genuine historical but not biographical interest, reveals clearly the conditions of the service to which Prior gave his energies, conditions which explain if they do not justify his tendency to watch for the main chance, and to jump—sometimes very promptly—on the toes of his best friends. Self-preservation was the first law, at least for this person of mean extraction, but, in spite of that, generous instincts seem to have predominated in his character. One has no thought that Mr. Eves is trying to "whitewash" Prior; he lays the record open before us, and the facts breed sympathy.

This interpretation of Prior's public career is, I think, the most valuable part of this book. The subtitle tells us that Prior was Poet and Diplomatist, but one gets the impression that he was a poet only occasionally and that many of the occasions were trivial. Mr. Eves makes use of the poems

for all they are worth biographically, and that is all perhaps that we have a right to expect. Certainly Prior himself would have approved this attitude towards a study of his life. He was envoy extraordinary first, and poet only in so far as that role helped to bolster up his friendships and add to his prestige.

Mr. Eves has control of his material and an unobstrusive way of making his characters alive in his writing. No life of Prior ought to be dull; several of them have been; this one certainly is not. It is an excellent book.

WILLIAM HENRY IRVING.

A COLONIAL WAR IN THE WEST INDIES

QUEEN ANNE'S NAVY IN THE WEST INDIES. By Ruth Bourne. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1939. Pp. ix, 334. $3.00.

In a field where the cautious angels of professional history have conspicuously failed to tread, Miss Bourne's monograph is a welcome contribution, a carefully documented study of a colonial war in the West Indies. Though the defense in this case was fairly successful, the job was far from being easy and glorious, and much of Miss Bourne's book is concerned with the difficulties facing the naval commanders. Protecting the scanty white population of the plantations would have been a thankless task for the best of naval forces, and Queen Anne's navy was far from any standard of perfection. Many of the free inhabitants of the islands were "convict gaol-birds" as dangerous as the enemy, the slightest suspicion of a voyage to the Caribbean might cause mutiny among the impressed sailors, and the average officer expected nothing but "a disabled ship, a financial muddle, . . . ill health, and unemployment." Even the ablest commanders spent most of their time in port, fighting disease and squabbling with their officers, the governor, and the inhabitants. Though France's preoccupation with the Continent saved the West Indies from more than sporadic raids and attacks on shipping, both merchants and planters became heartily tired of the war which was to have brought them easy prosperity. In more than a decade of warfare there were no decisive actions, and two of the English captains were shot for refusing to give battle to an inferior French convoy.

Though awkward expressions are an occasional result of Miss Bourne's attempt to reproduce the flavor of the documents, her book is free from bothersome maritime technicalities. "Postures of defense," "sailers," and "cruisers" (a treacherous word when used in its eighteenth-century sense) become at times a little wearying, but the author has examined her sources thoroughly and has given us a clear picture of the war in this area. In

spite of the implications of her preface, she has never really attacked any larger questions. Her contention that "Britain achieved and maintained" her sea supremacy, "not by military victories and naval superiority, as is often supposed, but by the advancement of industry and the increase of commerce," is simply not proven in the course of this specialized study. A conscious English decision to fight Louis XIV on land may still have been the reason for the comparative failure of the navy "as a machine of aggression" in this particular war. Light on these larger problems might have come from Sir Julian Corbett's *England in the Mediterranean* and *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, Joannes Tramond's *Manuel d'histoire maritime de la France* (since Miss Bourne complains of the lack of a balanced account of French naval history), and Admiral Castex' brilliant studies of the main problems of French naval strategy. But at present these questions can hardly be handled by the professional historian; this field needs even more badly the scholarly and critical mind which Miss Bourne has brought to its problems.

THEODORE ROPP.

SIGNIFICANT WRITINGS ON THE CONFEDERACY

THE SOUTH TO POSTERITY: *An Introduction to the Writing of Confederate History*. By Douglas Southall Freeman. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939. Pp. xii, 235. $2.50.

The less inclusive subtitle of this book is an accurate indication of its contents. Libraries are full of books on the Confederacy: memoirs, biographies, personal narratives which often contain important source material, military histories, and the voluminous documentary publications of the Federal government. The more massive this material becomes, the more necessary it is, for the beginner at least, to have an intelligent guide to the seeming chaos. There are bibliographies aplenty, but they are appallingly dull and fail to give the reader any real familiarity with the subject. It is fortunate that the author of the distinguished biography of Lee has set himself to the task of introducing, with a wealth of knowledge and an easy modesty, the significant writings on the Confederacy. He rightly eschews the scholarly monographs in favor of the contemporary diaries, collected letters, memoirs and apologia. He hides the bare bones of bibliography by clothing his subjects with a personality. A thumbnail sketch of the author, something of how the book was written and a sampling of its contents, is likely to lead the willing reader on and on. Everywhere Mr. Freeman is sympathetic, yet he is discriminating in his praise, as his comments on Henderson's life of Stonewall Jackson will

show. Perhaps he goes a bit too far when he calls Thomason's *Jeb Stuart* "a classic of Confederate literature."

With the exception of Lee, almost all the important Confederate leaders who survived the war wrote their memoirs; many others, especially the women, such as Mrs. Chesnut and Mrs. Pryor, kept diaries; and there was a rich harvest of memorabilia. Of all this and much more one is reminded by this all too brief volume. We wish there had been a chapter on Civil War fiction, or at least the mention of Sidney Lanier's *Tiger Lilies*. Or why not mention, along with Sarah Morgan Dawson's *A Confederate Girl's Diary*, the rarer *Reminiscences of Confederate Service* by her husband? Or for North Carolina interest could there be anything better than Mrs. Cornelia Spencer's *The Last Ninety Days of the War in North Carolina*. But obviously the difficulty with including everything good is that Mr. Freeman's running narrative would be cluttered up with bibliography and its usefulness as an "introduction" would be destroyed. At the end of the book is "A Confederate Book Shelf," "designed for those who do not aspire to become specialists but wish to have a moderate familiarity with the literature." Perhaps Mr. Freeman overrates the specialist; in any case this delightful book ought to be on the shelf of every student of the Confederacy. Should it run into another edition, there are a few typographical errors to be corrected.

R. H. Woody.

THE KING OF DULLNESS

Mr. Cibber of Drury Lane. By Richard Hindry Barker. New York: Columbia University Press, 1939. Pp. 278. $3.00.

Colley Cibber, well and favorably known to all of us as the King of Dullness, was in addition an actor, a playwright, and a theater-manager, and any book about him is bound to concern itself with two things: in the first place, his character and capacity—we want to know the truth about him—and in the second, his theatrical connections. In the book under review Mr. Barker balances these two concerns with notable discretion, though perhaps the main emphasis is on the second. Colley Cibber was a man of abounding self-confidence and, like all men of that type, was likely to make enemies more readily than friends. He was slated for success from the beginning, since he was energetic, not overscrupulous, and capable of foreseeing and taking due advantage of the gradual changes in that public taste which he thought it his duty to serve. He had a genuine liking for notoriety and preferred ridicule to neglect. He was not a serious artist, though he doubtless thought he was and cer-

tainly worked hard enough at the task in hand. He won the hearts of London audiences as Sir Novelty Fashion, but his virtuosity as an actor was limited to such parts. Several of his plays were immediately successful, not because they were witty or well written or showed any evidence of the comprehensive soul, but because they were a clever hodgepodge of old and new, of naughtiness and sentimentality, written with constant awareness of the special capacities of the actors available and with a lively sense for the effective in stage business. His one book, the *Apology*, was widely read and to a large extent deserved to be, even though the portrait of the author is there sharply distorted. The laurel made a fool of him, of course, and served only to emphasize what Mr. Sherburn calls the "pert vacuity" of his mind.

Such points as these and many more are competently discussed by Mr. Barker. His sketch of Cibber himself is based on a careful use of Cibber's own portrait of himself in the *Apology* and on wide reading in periodicals, letter-collections, miscellaneous pamphlets, and other primary sources—after all, recent scholarship has done little enough for Cibber—and the picture that finally emerges as one reads is steady enough to give one confidence in its truth. Cibber's relations with Grub Street and with Pope, Fielding, and such minor literary celebrities as Mrs. Laetetia Pilkington are admirably sketched. His adaptations from earlier plays and his rewriting of some plays by contemporaries are analyzed, sometimes with a superabundance of detail and quotation, and the reader is left with an adequate basis for judging the truth or falsity of the charge of plagiarism which Cibber's enemies were constantly leveling against him.

The general reader will be least interested probably in the sections of the book which concern the management of the theaters and the complicated story of their rivalries. These very mundane and often scandalous affairs bear a close relation, however, to the development of taste and must be studied carefully by all who are seeking to understand the history of the drama. Mr. Barker's book will be very useful to all such scholars.

WILLIAM HENRY IRVING.

THE APOSTLE OF ETERNAL VALUES

THOREAU. By Henry Seidel Canby. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1939. Pp. 508. $3.75.

Mr. Canby has special qualifications for writing a biography of Thoreau. He is a person of experience with books and criticism, the lifeblood of the masters. Possibly the kind of experience which he has had himself outdoors has led him to acquiesce too readily in the Torrey-

Burroughs attack on Thoreau's knowledge of botany and ornithology. But he has come to his subject in the natural, or Wordsworthian, progress from loving nature to loving a man. And by sympathy he personally embodies that true Americanism which he emphasizes in the apostle of eternal values. Furthermore, Mr. Canby has what his subject would have called a transcendental discernment into the sort of reality that most concerned Thoreau. Quietly, again and again, he shows his saturation with the material and makes acute observations. He has brought together much significant information—as on Thoreau's relations to love—which had been scattered or ignored hitherto in measuring the great man. He has met a deep need of our country.

In a sense Thoreau concealed his tracks Indian-fashion. He himself admitted a fault of perverse and therefore misleading paradox. May one then err if one recasts slightly Mr. Canby's interpretation? Thus, if latterly the diarist wrote in proportion more naturalistic data and fewer spiritual apothegms than he had done earlier, the reason was not a lessened spiritual interest or poetic sensitiveness, but the fact that he had already recorded much. Since broad outlines and contours had been surveyed and established, Thoreau did not care to repeat himself too often or too overtly. But he left blazes and other evidence—ubiquitous arrowheads—along his trail. The profound joy with which he digested Hindu religious writings did not arise from their offering him precisely a new solution. Instead they attested with a timeless authority the truth that he had already discerned beneath numerous dogmatisms or blindly authoritative accretions upon Christianity and nature. Though he had previously found truth in "pagan" Homer, Greek tragedy, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, he sought independent corroboration from other sources of the past. Their everlasting validity he detected through their immediate applicability to the present.

The present portion of eternity was vitally important to Thoreau. In the discipline of finding himself, he had to relate himself to nature, to search out her principles, be consciously an organic part of her spirit. He sought out her fundamental patterns, wherein trees, birds, animals have their several worlds apart from man, but wherein, nevertheless, man and his mind may participate. Life had to mean something to Thoreau as an individual. Every person's genius must exert itself in its own way, in keeping with its own truth, to evaluate responsibility to self and society. The kingdom of God, which is within, is not anarchical. To love children, to revere friendship, to live with nature spiritually, to sense the beauty and holiness of manifold creation, did not mean to derive little from the central European tradition, from Greek and Biblical thought,

from Shakespeare, Milton, and Wordsworth. To the end Thoreau repeatedly echoed them all from Hellenic and Asiatic myth and fable, eloquent scriptural verses, to Wordsworth's *Leechgatherer*. Yet he had to stand alone on his feet, had to know these things not merely from tradition but from his own senses, his individual experience. Creeds of institutions, worldly conventions like the pocketbook, professional reform, he regarded as encrustations on the essential, never to be allowed by anybody to prevent a person from rising to the full stature of a man. The outcome here need not be either rest or popular recognition. It would be a true liberty, a liberty not without beauty or humor, a token of peace in living by the divine will.

This approach did not divorce man and nature. To Thoreau it seemed fundamental. His statements constituted his Concord report to the council of man, but they represented essential America. America—being new—had an opportunity to perceive the basic pattern of life which had been obscured by much of so-called civilization elsewhere. True, the pattern had been discerned by master minds in Greece, India, Persia, Palestine, England, and elsewhere. America had been needed to bring that ultimate unit, the individual, out of all slaveries back to Nature, the spiritual reality. Having consciously breathed the air of that morning wind which forever blows, it could make its own fresh contribution to the unceasing creative process. Thoreau's stout heart and mind utter crisp, meaty sentences to America and the world today: resist all tyrannies, enable all individuals to be of worth in themselves whatever the present hour or place. Like inscriptions his words were meant to have a lasting and universal value to mankind. EDGAR C. KNOWLTON.

A DEARTH OF STATESMANSHIP

STATESMEN OF THE LOST CAUSE: *Jefferson Davis and His Cabinet.* By Burton J. Hendrick. Boston: Little, Brown and Company; An Atlantic Monthly Press Publication, 1939. Pp. xvii, 452. $3.75.

It is apparent that Mr. Hendrick is indulging in a bit of irony when he uses the term "Statesmen" in the title of his book on the Confederacy. For it is the great dearth of statesmanship that astonishes him. The explanation of this decline in statesmanship in a section that had long dominated the Union he finds in the fact "that the South which started the Confederacy, and dominated its government for four years, was not the South that wrote the Declaration of Independence, played so important a role in framing the Constitution, and provided so much leadership for the United States in its earliest days." Rather, it was a newer South

in which the tobacco aristocracy of Virginia had been supplanted by the *nouveau riche* cotton aristocracy of Alabama, Mississippi, and the other states of the Lower South. These were the states that unwisely led the South into secession; they formed a region "not particularly well-mannered or cultured, but pushing, self-assertive, and arrogant." The civil leaders of the Confederacy were therefore without the social and cultural background which would qualify them to administer the complex affairs of a would-be nation. This would account for a mistaken foreign policy, a falsely conceived financial policy, a bitter factionalism, and an emphasis upon States' rights which if uncontrolled would destroy the Confederacy as it was threatening to destroy the Union.

It is an interesting and suggestive thesis as stated in the opening chapter. But it seems to be an afterthought since much of it is contradicted by the book itself. That the Lower South unduly influenced the administration of the government is questionable. Indeed, Mr. Hendrick emphasizes the fact that Davis represented a section and not a state. It does not seem that any particular localism animated those whose business it was to decide policy; or if it did North Carolina was as guilty as Georgia. Much of the book would indicate that the abilities of the Confederate leaders were not of a low order. Benjamin, "the son of the keeper of a dried-fish shop in London," was exceedingly able; Mallory, Secretary of the Navy, who "started life as assistant to his widowed mother in running a sailor's boardinghouse," was "one of the most farseeing men in the administration"; and Reagan, the Postmaster General, the son of a tanner and himself a plantation overseer, was "industrious, honest, and successful." And, as Mr. Hendrick admits, those decendants of the aristocracy who reached places of prominence, as Randolph, Seddon, and Mason, were something less than successful. If some of the Confederate leaders were of lowly origin, it may be mentioned that neither Lincoln nor Grant could claim any great family distinction. Occasionally the author seems aware that the accident of birth does not explain all, and he undertakes to probe deeper to find more fundamental reasons for the Confederacy's failure—an involved question. It cannot be accounted for on military grounds (the great leaders here, it will be noted, came from Virginia) but rather in the domestic and foreign policies. Nearly half the volume is given to a retelling of the diplomatic adventures abroad, and the internal history—always the most neglected—of the Confederacy is given less attention.

The book has a certain air of authority or finality which seems more dogmatic than judicious. Is it really true that for ten years Davis "had been the foremost spokesman of the Southern pretensions which had finally

ended in conflict" (p. 89)? Or that the "cotton policy" of the Confederacy was so hopelessly wrong (pp. 201-215)? Or that the more effective the Federal blockade, the better the Confederacy liked it (p. 207)? Would it not have been nearer the whole truth to point out the importance of American wheat to England when discussing the reasons for the Confederate diplomatic failure? Is it true that the "small-scale farmers" and "up-country" inhabitants who opposed the war were "for the most part, Whigs" (p. 332)? The estimable Mrs. Chesnut, who has befriended so many writers on the period, would hardly be pleased to find her name consistently misspelled; it is Cheves, not Cheeves (p. 190); one wonders how even the peripatetic Mr. Mann could be both a Georgian (p. 107) and a Virginian (401); and even the versatile Reagan would hardly agree that there were two Confederate postmasters general (p. 324). All in all, this book, though very readable, is long on interpretation and short on fact. R. H. Woody.

ESSAYS ON SHAKESPEARE

Shakespeare. By Mark Van Doren. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1939. Pp. 344. $3.00.

Were a person to write of a poet and his poetry, he had best be a creator himself and testify in verse. In lieu of that, he might translate the subject into a figurative prose evoking the several tones of the master. So Mr. Van Doren has done. He has likewise converted the frequently inspired words of Shakespeare's critics into his own substance. The reader of each play will find illumination on poetry, style, rhetoric, vocabulary, characters, and the separately existent worlds inhabited by Lear, Hamlet, Rosalind, and the rest. Each drama is revealed as a distinctive mode of life. So much is good that deliberate reading is to be recommended, because the essays may be held up to the light, and their ethers and body may be fully savored.

When so much is good, it may seem ungracious to suggest that a personal quirk may have flawed the understanding of the three bitter comedies. Or else an opening remains for scholars to explain the theater which reflected a society somehow tolerant of these plays, and of *Volpone*, Middleton's amoral London series, and the Tourneuresque type. At least Shakespeare may not be entirely isolated or confined to any play specifically under consideration. Perhaps, again, as with later drama, the sudden anger of Polixenes might shed light on Leontes's absolutist passion. Over and over Mr. Van Doren moves adroitly amid items of controversy. Yet he appears tinged with a quasi-humanism which distorts the significance of

Touchstone, Jaques, and Caliban. *Richard II* is to be viewed not as a tragedy but rather as a history. Misgivings arise when Aristotelianism slips in. Squally moments, however, occur far between, and do not mar the essential serenity with which the book may be regarded.

EDGAR C. KNOWLTON.

A REAPPRAISAL OF THE TENTH PRESIDENT

JOHN TYLER: *Champion of the Old South.* By Oliver Perry Chitwood. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1939. Pp. xv, 496. $4.00.

In the Preface to this full-length biography, Professor Chitwood presents as a major objective a satisfactory answer to the riddle of John Tyler. Was he a "patriotic statesman or a disloyal politician"? After a painstaking survey of Tyler's character and career, the author reverses the old Whig verdict of black treachery and concludes that "Tyler was a man who put loyalty to principle above every other consideration."

The central theme of the volume is John Tyler's basic consistency in applying his States' rights principles to constitutional questions. A spirit of localism, caught in childhood from his father, and nurtured by his adoration for Jefferson, hardened into an inflexible political philosophy. When his strict-constructionist ideals were challenged by Clay's nationalistic program in 1841, Tyler, who had assumed the presidency on Harrison's death, successfully employed the executive veto. Professor Chitwood applauds Tyler's decision as a triumph of conviction over expediency, but notes that this idealism probably was mixed with the very natural hope that his actions might lead to a presidential victory in 1844.

The author does not hesitate to demonstrate Tyler's political limitations. His very attempts at consistency in his States' rights attitude led him into what Professor Chitwood terms "a dilettante doctrinairism that often marred his record as a statesman." His decision, after the election of 1836, to remain with the Whigs "was probably the greatest mistake ever made by Tyler." He should have realized that the dominant group within the Whig party advocated measures incompatible with his own ideas, and certainly he should not have accepted the Whig nomination for the vice-presidency in 1840. Although Tyler did not endorse the national bank in the log-cabin-and-hard-cider frolic of 1840, he, like others, straddled the issues and "stooped to the low practices of this charlatanic campaign."

In this biography Tyler gains in stature as a diplomat. He gave general supervision to negotiations leading to the signing of the Webster-Ashburton Treaty; indeed, at a critical moment when a rupture in the

consultations was threatened, the President approached Lord Ashburton and smoothed over the difficulties. Tyler counted the annexation of Texas as the crowning glory of his administration. With justice he took to himself a large share of the honor for this important venture in American expansion.

From the pages of the book there emerges the distinct figure of the gaunt Virginian, courteous and mild-mannered. As if to compensate for any deficiencies in statecraft, Tyler offered in full measure the cultured graces of his age. Professor Chitwood sees in him the incarnation of the social ideals of Tidewater Virginia in the middle period of our history. "In his personality were thus to be found to an unusual degree those traits that mark the gentleman, and no finer gentleman than John Tyler ever donned the senatorial toga or sat in the seat of the Chief Magistrate of the United States."

Professor Chitwood has provided the first adequate biography of our first president-by-inheritance. He is to be congratulated for his judicious arrangement of subject matter, for his neat distribution of well-turned phrases, and, above all, for his careful evaluation of controversial evidence.

JOSEPH C. ROBERT.

THE PROGRESS OF A SIEGE

THE SIEGE OF CHARLESTON, WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE PROVINCE OF SOUTH CAROLINA: *Diaries and Letters of Hessian Officers from the von Jungkenn Papers in the William L. Clements Library*. Translated and Edited by Bernhard A. Uhlendorf. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1938. Pp. xi, 445. $4.00.

This volume contains three diaries and six letters from five Hessian officers who served with the British forces during the American Revolution. The diaries of Captain Johann Ewald, Captain Johann Hinrichs, and Major General Johann Christoph von Huyn, covering the winter and spring of 1780, constitute the bulk of the volume and are of first importance. They are contemporary accounts by intelligent and observant persons who were in a position to be reasonably objective in their comments. The diarists supplement each other at many points, for they held different positions during the siege. And while their primary task was of a military nature, they did not confine themselves, in their informal reports to their superior, to the minutiae of military events, and their descriptions of the country are of no little interest. Particularly is this true of Hinrichs, who kept the most detailed account and at the end added "Philosophical and historical remarks concerning South Carolina." Never-

theless, the chief importance of the volume depends upon the rather full record of the progress of the siege. Some new light is shed and some corrections made. The editor and translator has done his work well but unobtrusively. The Introduction contains helpful sketches of the authors of the documents.

Students of the past are turning more and more to the original records, for in them they find an authenticity and flavor which no second-hand account can equal. Scholars are indebted to the Clements Library and the University of Michigan for preserving and making available these documents. R. H. Woody.

FOUR BIOGRAPHIES OF AMERICAN WRITERS

Elizabeth Stuart Phelps. By Mary Angela Bennet. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1939. Pp. vii, 172. $2.00.

Frank R. Stockton: *A Critical Biography*. By Martin I. J. Griffin. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1939. Pp. vii, 178. $2.00.

Henry Blake Fuller: *A Critical Biography*. By Constance M. Griffin. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1939. Pp. vii, 117. $1.50.

Orestes A. Brownson: *A Pilgrim's Progress*. By Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1939. Pp. 320. $2.50.

The first three works listed above are doctoral dissertations professing to be at once critical estimates and biographical sketches of three authors known chiefly as writers of fiction. Each one of them breaks new ground of information and adds importantly to our bibliographical knowledge. The opus on Fuller leads us to believe that a vast store of material exists for a finished biography, but the writer has merely dipped into it. There are probably good reasons for the fact, but one who admires the author of *The Chevalier of Pensieri-Vani* as much as does the present reviewer is frankly disappointed in the slightness of the study. The other two authors, very popular in their day, may be said to deserve the treatment which they have received at the hands of these Ph. Demons—but not Fuller.

The work on Brownson contains less material that is new to specialists but as a critical study is far superior to the rest of the books here considered. This is all the more astonishing when one realizes that its author, a very young man, has merely expanded an honors thesis submitted for the

B.A. degree at Harvard, and that the subject of the study, Orestes Brownson, is probably the most difficult figure among the American romantics to explain.

Brownson in the course of his career was an agnostic, a Universalist, a Unitarian, a transcendentalist, and a Catholic. He was a novelist, a political agitator, a theorist in regard to social problems, and a theologian constantly at odds with the bishops who sought to put a snaffle on him. To make a consistent narrative of his changes of opinion and to present the man as the robust journalist that he actually was are tasks which would test the most astute and experienced historian and biographer. While Mr. Schlesinger assuredly has sailed blithely over a few dark and mysterious seas he has charted a course for Brownson that is in the main as accurate as it is interesting. The style of the book is fast-moving and clear-cut.

Of the four works here mentioned the subscribers to this journal will be apt to read with most interest this amazing account of one of the giants of the "Stammering Century"—a man who once tried to spread the cause of Calhoun in New England! CLARENCE GOHDES.

ECONOMICS FOR PRIVATE FORESTERS AND FOREST OWNERS

ECONOMICS OF PRIVATE FORESTRY. By Ralph W. Marquis. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1939. Pp. 219. $3.00.

The purpose of this volume in the words of the author is "to consider the economic problems that affect the private forest operator in relation to his plans for sustained yield or liquidation." It contains an analysis of the economic problems relating to the sustained yield management of private forest lands, the economic obstacles and incentives to private forestry practice, the theory of price determination of forest products, the profits from sustained yield or liquidation, and the relation of private forestry to the forest problem.

The book is intended for foresters, forestry students, and forest owners who are interested in the economics of forestry, who want to know the incentives as well as the obstacles to the practice of forestry, and who want an over-all view of forest economics, past, present, and future. American forestry should be the better for more books of this kind and quality.

CLARENCE F. KORSTIAN.

